



# THE INDEPENDENT

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## FREE TODAY: GUIDE TO THE BEST AND WORST PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND

LEAGUE TABLES - 36-PAGE SPECIAL SECTION



# Condon set to climb down over 'institutional racism' charge

SIR PAUL CONDON, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, is preparing to make a dramatic climb down and admit for the first time that his force is "institutionally racist".

His acceptance of a new definition of "institutional racism" as laid out in the Stephen Lawrence inquiry report will infuriate rank and file police officers but will boost the chances of Britain's most powerful policeman keeping his job.

Until now, Sir Paul, whose career hangs in the balance of Sir William Macpherson's report, has refused to admit that his force was "institutionally racist", arguing that the phrase suggested, wrongly, that the majority of his officers were prejudiced and the force was deliberately discriminatory.

Crucially, the definition of institutional racism chosen by Sir William in his report is expected to refer to "unwitting" prejudice and racist stereotyping.

The Lawrence report is expected to say that if any chief officer cannot accept the problem of institutionalised racism within the police service they should be sacked. But the new definition will allow Sir Paul to endorse it because it says racism can be "unwitting".

According to leaked extracts of the inquiry's findings, the definition of institutionalised racism will be: "The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin."

"It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people."

BY JASON BENNETTO  
Crime Correspondent

The report is expected to state: "There must be an unequivocal acceptance of the problem of institutionalised racism and its nature before it can be addressed."

The report will conclude that there was a "pernicious and institutionalised racism" among the Metropolitan Police.

Speaking just before it was leaked Sir Paul said: "I hope, pray, anticipate that the judge will say something very significant around institutional racism. I will embrace that with zeal."

The Commissioner spent about two hours at the Home Office yesterday reading the completed report. Stephen Lawrence's parents, Doreen and Neville, also accepted an invitation to the Home Office to read the report. Sir Paul has insisted that he will not resign unless the report accuses him personally of malpractice or dishonesty. A senior Scotland Yard source said: "He's (Sir Paul) determined to stay. He has no intention of leaving before January 2000 when he has said he will retire."

A Scotland Yard spokesman said Sir Paul expressed his concern at the inquiry that the phrase "institutional racism" could be interpreted "as meaning that most police officers were deliberately racist."

He asked Sir William to provide a "new workable definition" that could act as a "rallying point for reform". But some campaigners believe Sir Paul's position is untenable even if he admits to institutionalised racism.

Suresh Grover, the head of The Monitoring Group, a west London based anti-racist



Neville Lawrence (left) arriving at the Home Office in London yesterday to study the Macpherson inquiry report into the murder of his son, Stephen. Fiona Hanson

group, said: "As police commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir Paul dug himself into a massive hole when he vehemently refused to admit to institutional racism."

"I can't see how he can remain as head of the Met. His authority has been so badly

damaged." Jack Straw also suffered some damage to his authority yesterday during angry clashes in the Commons when the Home Secretary was attacked for his "autocratic" attempt to ban publication of details of the report before the official launch on Wednesday.

Mr Straw disclosed that an inquiry had been set up to find who leaked parts of the document to a Sunday newspaper.

Shadow Home Secretary Sir Norman Fowler branded his efforts to block publication of the inquiry report "entirely unjustified and an autocratic course

of action". Mr Straw is expected to use Wednesday's publication of the Lawrence report as a spring board to announce sweeping reforms to race laws and police training.

Among the changes will be to bring the police under the Race Relations Act, from which

it is currently exempt. This will enable individuals to take officers to court for racist behaviour and makes forces subject to investigation by the Commission for Racial Equality.

There will also be a national recruitment target of seven

percent of officers from ethnic minorities, and race relations training for all police officers.

Public bodies will also be expected to monitor the employment and promotion of ethnic minority employees.

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## Start preparing for Euro now, says Blair

BY ANDREW GRICE AND DIANE COYLE

TONY BLAIR will today issue the Government's most positive statement yet on the single currency by calling on the private and public sectors to start preparing now for British entry.

But the National Changeover Plan for the euro unveiled in the Prime Minister's House of Commons statement will disappoint businesses looking for a clear lead from the Government on when to start their preparations.

Mr Blair's statement will be seen as the clearest signal yet that Britain will join - but he will reject calls to set a target date. It is therefore likely to anger both the pro- and anti- sides of the business community.

Experts believe the Government's own bill for converting from pounds to euros could be in the region of £1bn, based on the cost to the City of its preparations for the launch of the single currency on 1 January this year.

However, Treasury rules prevent the Government from



Tony Blair: Will not set a date for changeover

spending any public money on converting computer systems to euros before the referendum. A letter circulated to departments explicitly bars spending on computer equipment, staff, pilot projects or consultants ahead of a "yes" vote.

This will frustrate businesses looking for details of how much the Government will spend and when, before they are prepared to spend any of their own money.

Ruth Lea, head of policy at the eurosceptic Institute of Directors, said: "Nobody should start making any costly adjustments before a referendum." The Changeover Plan will suggest that it would take Britain three years to introduce the single currency if the public votes "Yes" in a referendum shortly after the next general election. Mr Blair has pencilled in a general election for the spring of 2001, followed by a referendum in the autumn. This would mean that the pound would be abolished in 2004.

The length of time the plan allows between a yes vote and membership is a key issue for business, represented on the committee drawing up the plan by the Confederation of British Industry and British Chambers of Commerce.

It is expected to outline a three-year timetable, which is accepted by retailers' and banks' trade associations but not by all businesses. It could prove even harder for government departments like the Inland Revenue to convert within three years.

## Social services to be targeted by 'hit squads'

BY COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

MINISTERS WILL today threaten to introduce controversial hit squads to take over social services departments which are failing children and the elderly.

The measure will form part of a Green Paper to raise standards of social care. Also included will be plans to publish a series of 46 performance tables covering services ranging from child protection to care for the elderly.

"It would need to be primary legislation and we want to introduce a Bill at the earliest possible opportunity," said a ministerial source.

The reforms, to be announced in the Green Paper 'A new approach to social services performance', follow a report last year by Sir William Utting into a series of child abuse cases during the Seventies and Eighties.

Haunted by the scandals, ministers are determined to tackle continuing anxiety about the record of local authorities



for poor social services. The failures have included Labour-controlled Hackney in east London, where a social worker abused six children in care before he died of AIDS, and systematic problems in child care in Labour-controlled Ealing, also in London - described last year by the then health minister Paul Boateng as one of the worst cases he had seen.

The Green Paper warns that the Government will seek primary legislation to give it new wider powers to intervene where necessary to require an authority to draw up an action

plan for improvement and deliver a specified level of performance by a set deadline: force an authority to accept external management help; and, in the most serious cases, for responsibility to be transferred to another authority or another management team to run the services.

It says: "The Government will work to help authorities to tackle poor performance and will act in partnership with the Local Government Association where appropriate. Where there are serious failures, the Government will be prepared to take firm action to secure improvement, including statutory intervention powers which will be exercised when necessary."

"The Government will act to protect vulnerable people who are put at risk by poor services and it will ensure that it has the statutory powers at its disposal to do this."

A spokesman for the Labour-controlled Local Government Association said: "The Government is seeking draconian powers. We want to raise standards through co-operation."

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'Takes us to the end of the earth via the rich landscape of the human heart'

THE TIMES

JOHN le CARRÉ



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SINGLE & SINGLE

The new bestseller from John le Carré

OUT TODAY IN HARDBACK

Hodder & Stoughton

# Straw orders inquiry into leak

JACK STRAW, the Home Secretary, announced a formal investigation last night into the leak of elements of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry report.

Home Office ministers, their advisers, and the civil servants who received copies of the report by Sir William Macpherson will be questioned during the inquiry, which will be conducted by David Omand, the Permanent Secretary at the Home Office. Only a small number of copies of Sir William's report into the death of the black teenager were made inside the Home Office, and it was not copied to other Whitehall departments. But it was partially leaked to a Sunday newspaper.

Earlier yesterday Downing Street played down the prospect of a leak inquiry, expressing scepticism that the leak would be found. But Mr Straw condemned the "breach of trust" involved in the disclosure and told MPs: "We are very serious about tracing this leak."

The Home Secretary clashed with the Tory opposition as he made a Commons statement defending his decision to obtain an injunction against *The Sunday Telegraph* on Saturday night, which forced the newspaper to drop the report from its later editions.

After Sir Norman Fowler, the Shadow Home Secretary, attacked the legal action, Mr Straw accused him of speaking as "chairman of a newspaper company rather than as a member of this House."

Mr Straw was forced by the

BY ANDREW GRICE  
Political Editor

Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, to withdraw his remark and apologise to Sir Norman, who is non-executive chairman of Regional Independent Media Holdings Ltd.

Sir Norman said the unprecedented and "autocratic" injunction was a "shabby exercise that shows this Government at its worst". Dismissing Mr Straw's claim that the Lawrence report should have been disclosed to Parliament, he said: "It is the Government that is the chief leaker in advance of its own announcements."

The Home Secretary said he decided that prior publication of the report was likely to "cause distress to the Lawrence family" and subject the Metropolitan Police and Sir Paul Condon, its Commissioner, to wholly unfair speculation to which they could not respond. In a hint that he will back Sir Paul's fight to avoid resigning over the report, Mr Straw praised Sir Paul and his force for their "very fine work over the years".

He said: "The claims that the freedom of the press has been challenged by this injunction are absurd." He disclosed that the BBC telephoned a Home Office press officer, claiming that *The Sunday Telegraph* had obtained a copy of the full Lawrence report. A Home Office source said: "We thought they were going to run a ten page supplement on it."



Sir Paul Condon, arriving at Scotland Yard yesterday morning, has apparently gained the backing of the Home Secretary against calls for his resignation over the Stephen Lawrence report

## Two big words that lie at heart of case

BY KIM SENGUPA

TWO WORDS lie at the heart of the acrimony over the Lawrence inquiry report: institutional racism. This is the "corrosive disease" that is said to have poisoned the relationship between the police and Britain's ethnic minorities. The vexed question of how these words are interpreted, how they translate into police attitudes on the streets, could affect the future of race relations.

During the public inquiry, Sir William Macpherson had 18 different definitions of the term submitted to him. He distilled them into one, defining it as "the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin".

He added: "It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amounts to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people."

Sir William's definition and his diagnosis mark a major departure from the Scarman Report into deprivation, race and crime which followed the Brixton riots 18 years ago. Though devastating in his critique of official attitudes, Lord Scarman concluded that there were racist officers in a police force that was not racist as an institution.

The views of law enforcement reformers have shifted significantly since then. Many believe that Lord Scarman's view was too limited and allowed racism to fester, hidden by the smokescreen of "a few rotten apples". Dr Robin Oakley, an influential adviser to Scotland Yard and the Home Office, said in evidence to the Lawrence inquiry that the "rotten apples" argument was misleading.

Another eminent expert on race and policing, Simon Holdaway, professor of sociology at

Sheffield University, talks of a culture in which laudable policies are formulated but not put into practice because of the transience of a section of officers. He says that young officers who come into the police with open minds are in the danger of having them shut by the prevailing culture.

The origins of the phrase "institutional racism" lie in the civil rights struggle of the late-1960s, when Stokely Carmichael used it to highlight the problem of how racism within public bodies and the business sector tried to block black integration and employment.

However, Assistant Commissioner Denis O'Connor, who is overseeing the issue of race and policing for Scotland Yard, says that the charge of institutional racism in policing and judicial organisations is now regarded in America as unhelpful. It has been replaced by attempts to analyse specific issues like the stop-and-searching by police of members of the ethnic minority communities.

To some officers, even Sir Paul Condon's limited acceptance of institutional racism within his force is a betrayal. Mike Bennett, the recently retired chairman of the Metropolitan Police Federation, who is said to reflect the opinion of many white rank-and-file officers, said: "The whole thing is turning into a farce. There would have been a lot of support for the Commissioner among his policemen and women if he had stuck to his guns and said 'yes, there are individual officers who are racist, and should be out' and 'no, the Metropolitan Police is not institutionally racist'."

"If he has changed his mind on this, it is to keep his job, and he won't be getting much respect from anyone for this. This is another victory for the politically correct lobby."

## Nation of Islam member who attacked PC guilty of affray

A MEMBER of Nation of Islam was found guilty yesterday of attacking a police officer at the inquiry into the race murder of Stephen Lawrence.

Rasaki Yesufu-Muhammad was said to have been part of a "baying mob" that tried to storm the crowded hearing in south London on the day that five men suspected of the black teenager's killing in April 1993 were due to give evidence.

The 29-year-old care worker - wearing the black Islamic or-

BY MELVYN HOWE

ganisation's trademark dark suit, white shirt and red bow tie at the time - twice kneed PC Stephen Dulkamp in the face during an "explosion of violence" last June. The constable, whose colleagues had to use CS gas to control the violence, said that he had been "extremely scared" and ended up "black and blue".

At Southwark Crown Court, in south London, where the jury

announced the verdict after more than six hours of deliberation, a sign went up from some 30 Nation of Islam members in the public gallery. The news received a similar reaction from supporters in the corridor outside.

Adjourning the case for three weeks for reports, Judge Jeffrey Rucker told defence counsel Matthew Ryder: "It is of any assistance to the defendant. I obviously have to think forward in these mat-

ters. In the extremely fraught atmosphere of that [inquiry] that gave rise to this case, everything that has happened since and is still happening, it seems to me that it would be wrong to raise the temperature at all if it is possible to avoid it."

"What I have in mind is a community service order," he added. He told Yesufu-Muhammad that he would be continuing, and said he would reserve his decision on a prosecution application for £1,600 costs.

Outside the court Mr Ryder said that while he still had to give the matter consideration: "It seems very likely that we will appeal against conviction."

Constable Dulkamp had told the trial that up to 50 members of the Nation of Islam behaved "almost military-like" at Hamlet House at Elephant and Castle, where the inquiry was held. Two of them stood "sentry duty" either side of a lift, while another directed the movements of the rest with a megaphone.

"They ignored everyone else - almost like a guard at the palace," he said. He said violence flared when some tried to jump a queue of several hundred people waiting to get in to the hearing.

"At least three of the Nation of Islam came on top of me," PC Dulkamp recalled. He was punched to the floor before twice being kneed in the face by Yesufu-Muhammad. The officer managed to grab his leg, and hang on "for dear life".

In evidence, Yesufu-Muhammad, of Northolt, Middlesex, had insisted that he had simply been hunting for his glasses when the constable struck him with his baton, put him in a headlock and dragged him across the floor: he added that the Nation of Islam stood for "peace and orderliness" and "emanated contagious love".

A written statement by Stephen's father, Neville Lawrence, was read out to the

court. In it Mr Lawrence, who paid a brief visit to the court yesterday, said the Nation of Islam had attended the inquiry at his invitation. He said he could "not imagine them starting trouble".

In his final address to the jury defence counsel, Mr Ryder insisted police had arrested the wrong man and then tried to conceal the fact. "The cover-ups, the denials and the massaging of the truth needs to stop," he declared.

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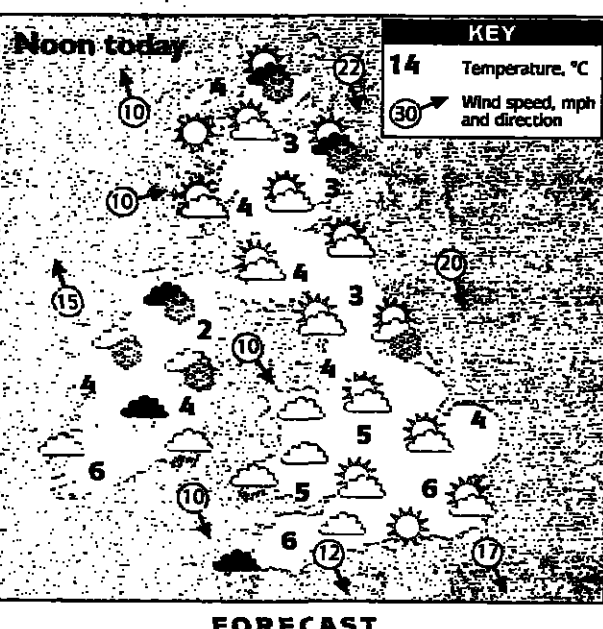
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### BRITAIN TODAY



### FORECAST

General situation: It will be a very cold but mainly bright start. North-east Scotland will have further heavy snow showers, although sunny spells in the west will become more widespread this afternoon. The odd wintry shower will also move down the North Sea coast, but most of England and Wales will have a dry morning with good sunny spells. Northern Ireland will be cloudy with snow gradually turning to rain. Rain, preceded by some snow will also spread into Wales and western parts of England this afternoon.

London: SE England: Channeled by a breezy and cold start, but dry with sunny spells. The wind will ease this afternoon as cloud builds from the west. A moderate to fresh north-westerly wind. Max temp 5-7°C (41-45°F).

SE Anglia, NE & E England: Cold with the odd sleet or snow shower, but on the whole it will be dry with sunny spells. A fresh north-west wind, easing later. Max temp 3-6°C (37-43°F).

West Scotland, Aberdeen & N Isles: Heavy snow showers and a chilly wind this morning. Better sunny spells this afternoon as the showers ease off. A fresh north-west wind at first. Max temp 1-3°C (34-37°F).

SE & SW Scotland, NW Scotland, W Isles: Edinburgh & Glasgow: Cold and bright with sunshine all day. Cloud will increase later with snow towards evening in the extreme west. Wind becoming light and variable. Max temp 3-5°C (37-41°F).

W Ireland: Cold, cloudy and wet with sleet and snow turning slowly to rain. Wind becoming moderate south-easterly. Max temp 2-5°C (36-41°F).

### OUTLOOK

Wednesday will have sunny spells and wintry showers in England and Wales while Northern Ireland and western Scotland will have some light rain, but the east of Scotland will be dry. Overnight rain will bring milder air for Thursday.

### TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout: Leytonstone. Major roadworks on new M11 link road. Until 21st December. Cambridge: A10 between Foston and M11. Resurfacing and bridge maintenance work at Shepreth Mill. Until 28th February. Bristol: M5 J16-19. Major Roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 23rd June 2001. Warwickshire: M42 Between J10 Tamworth services and J3 Sutton Coldfield. Roadworks and contraflow. Until 23rd April. Greater Manchester: A57. Narrow lanes Manchester-bound, due to Manchester construction work. Until 28th February.

South Yorkshire: M1 Between J54 Tinsley Viaduct (A6100) & J34 Tinsley Viaduct (A6170). Sheffield. Carriageway reduced to 2 lanes southbound. Until 21st November 2000. Gloucestershire: A40. Landown. Rd Cheltenham. Closed due to roadworks. Diversion in place. Until 1st June. Suffolk: A14 Fallowfield. Ipswich. Roadworks. Until 28th February. AA Roadside Call 0336 461777 for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

### VESTERDAY

#### EXTREMES

Warmest: St Helier 10C (50F)  
Coldest (day): Aylesmore 2C (36F)  
Wettest: Lough 0.79 in  
Sunniest: Christchurch 6.5 hrs  
For 24hrs to 2pm Monday

Location	Temp	Wind	Pressure
Aberdeen	6.5	0	1016
Anglesey	0.7	0	1016
Aylesmore	0.1	6.3	1016
Belfast	0.3	0.7	1016
Birmingham	4.6	0.2	1016
Bournemouth	6.7	0.5	1016
Bristol	6.4	0.2	1016
Burnley	4.0	0	1016
Cardiff	6.9	0.2	1016
Carmarthen	1.3	0	1016
Cromer	1.3	0	1016
Edinburgh	2.6	0.2	1016
Exeter	5.1	0.2	1016
Falmouth	4.4	0.2	1016
Gloucester	6.1	0	1016
Harrogate	0.1	0.6	1016
Hastings	8.1	0.7	1016
Hemel Hempstead	0	1.5	1016
Hereford	0	0	1016
Isle of Wight	0	0	1016
Jersey	3.8	9.1	1016
Leeds	3.0	0	1016
Leicester	1.2	2.5	1016
Liverpool	7.1	1.0	1016
London	6.8	0.2	1016
Lowestoft	4.0	0	1016
Manchester	3.8	0	1016
Margate	4.7	0.2	1016
Merseyside	1.5	0	1016
Middlesbrough	2.2	0.2	1016
Morecambe	1.4	0.5	1016
Newcastle	1.4	0.5	1016
Newport	1.4	0.5	1016
Northwich	3.4	0	1016
Nottingham	6.2	0	1016
Oldham	4.1	0	1016
Scarborough	0.8	0	1016
Sheffield	3.9	0	1016
Southport	5.0	0	1016
St Helier	10.0	11.1	1016
Swansea	7.0	0.5	1016
Torquay	3.9	0.2	1016
Torquay	3.6	0.7	1016
Weymouth	6.5	1.0	1016

#### SUN & MOON

Sun rises: 07.00  
Sun sets: 17.29  
Moon rises: 10.53  
Moon sets: 01.21  
First Quarter: Today

#### WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecasts call 0800 5009 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).


#### RAIN OR SHINE

SNOWSTORMS HAVE hindered rescue attempts for six skiers missing in the French Pyrenees, police said.

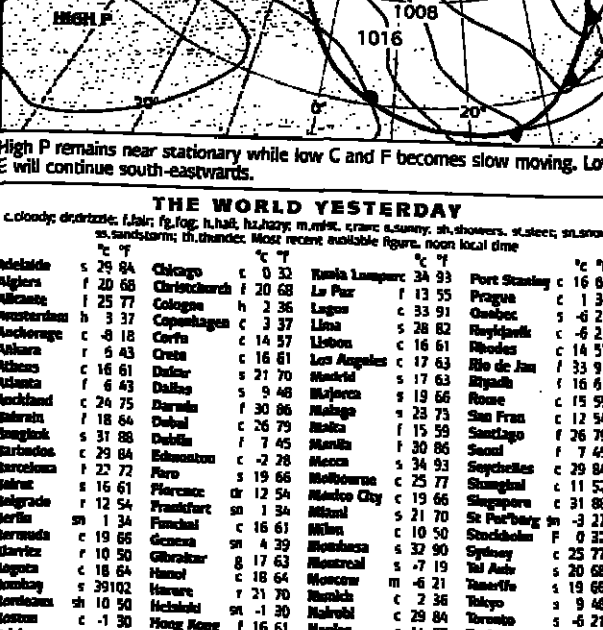
The missing - four men and two women - failed to return from a weekend trip near Bagnères de Bigorre. In the Alps, fresh snow was piling up after this month's snowfalls, the heaviest in decades. The risk of avalanches is blundering rescue attempts for three men stranded in an igloo at 9,900ft.

### THE WORLD

#### EUROPE NOON TODAY



#### THE ATLANTIC NOON TODAY



#### THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Location	Temp	Wind	Pressure
Abidjan	29.6	0	1016
Algiers	22.0	0	1016
Amman	17.7	0	1016
Ankara	13.7	0	1016
Antwerp	8.1	0	1016
Athens	16.1	0	1016
Auckland	16.1	0	1016
Bahia	27.0	0	1016
Bangkok	27.0	0	1016
Batavia	27.0	0	1016
Bombay	27.0	0	1016
Buenos Aires	27.0	0	1016
Calcutta	27.0	0	1016
Canton	27.0	0	1016
Cebu	27.0	0	1016
Colon	27.0	0	1016
Dacca	27.0	0	1016
Darwin	27.0	0	1016
Delhi	27.0	0	1016
Diary	27.0	0	1016
Dublin	27.0	0	1016
Edinburgh	27.0	0	1016
Frankfurt	27.0	0	1016
Glasgow	27.0	0	1016
Hankow	27.0	0	1016
Hong Kong	27.0	0	1016
Hyderabad	27.0	0	1016
Istanbul	27.0	0	1016
Kobe	27.0	0	1016
Kuala Lumpur	27.0	0	1016
London	27.0	0	1016
Lyons	27.0	0	1016
Manila	27.0	0	1016
Medan	27.0	0	1016
Meerut	27.0	0	1016
Moscow	27.0	0	1016
Mumbai	27.0	0	1016
Nagasaki	27.0	0	1016
Osaka	27.0	0	1016
Peking	27.0	0	1016
Rangoon	27.0	0	1016
Reykjavik	27.0	0	1016
Rio de Janeiro	27.0	0	1016
Singapore	27.0	0	1016
Sourabaya	27.0	0	1016
Taipei	27.0	0	1016
Tokyo	27.0	0	1016
Yokohama	27.0	0	1016



# Storm as Raphael defends rapist Koestler



The author and philosopher Arthur Koestler, left, and novelist Frederic Raphael

THE NOVELIST Frederic Raphael has provoked outrage by suggesting that the author and film-maker Jill Craigie "may have been excited by the risks" of being with Arthur Koestler, the author and philosopher who raped her.

Defending Koestler after the recent revelation that he raped Ms Craigie, wife of the former Labour leader Michael Foot, Raphael claims that "abuse of women was of it is not still a certificate of virility in many great men".

Yesterday a shocked Jill Craigie said: "The man doesn't know what he is talking about. I didn't know Koestler's character at all. I was very young and naive. I just thought he had gone mad. I never knew he could do such a thing."

"I remember sitting on my steps with my clothes torn for what seemed like hours."

In one of the biggest literary controversies of last year, a new biography of Koestler by Professor David Cesarani revealed him as a serial rapist and disclosed how one of his victims had been Jill Craigie in 1951.

Following the biography, students at Edinburgh University successfully demanded that a bust of Koestler, a benefactor of the university, be removed.

But in an article in the political journal *Prospect* this week, Raphael leaps to Koestler's defence, saying Ms Craigie and the writer Elizabeth Jane Howard whom Koestler is said to have treated callously, demanding she have an abortion after making her preg-

BY DAVID LISTER  
Arts News Editor

nant, "were not foolish virgins."

Both, he says, "have a right to their grievances, but both were ambitious and experienced women who liked the company of the powerful and the famous. Both had enough intelligence to read Koestler for a dangerous man. Is it any disparagement to suggest that they might, at the time, have been excited by the risks they were taking?"

"They did not deserve what he did, or is said to have done, but they were not foolish virgins and they knew Koestler's character. We are entitled to wonder - as Cesarani did not, but should have - what they were doing with him."

Frederic Raphael, whose novel about Oxford life *The Glittering Prizes* was a best seller, is particularly provocative about the incident involving Ms Craigie.

He writes: "As for the rape of Jill Craigie (Mrs Michael Foot)

which has made all the headlines, we need not doubt that force was used or that understandable shame explains why the facts have taken so long to come out. Without being ungallant, however, I was reminded of a judge who told me that the crucial questions in such cases were: 'Did you bite him? Did you scratch him?'

"I dare say that fear and embarrassment and even a sort of generosity led Michael Foot's wife to file no loud contemporary complaint. But the limitations of biography, especially when one witness is alive and another dead, are obvious here... We may have had the facts; we do not, and cannot, have them all."

In an interview after publication of the biography last year, Ms Craigie told how Koestler had abused her hospitality when she invited him to lunch and raped her while banging her head against the floor. "This was all about power," she said. "I tried to forget about it."

"Everyone kept going on about what a wonderful man Koestler was. One day, our friend Anthony Crosland said, 'You know he's a rapist'. Michael was shocked. I was relieved. I'd always thought there must have been others. But I still couldn't admit he'd raped me. Then, years later, I got rather drunk at a dinner party and it suddenly came out."

A spokeswoman for the Scottish Women's Aid Centre, which took a keen interest in the removal of the Koestler bust from Edinburgh University, said yesterday: "Mr Raphael's remarks are extremely unhelpful. Rape is a crime and it is the rapist's responsibility. The blame is on the perpetrator of the crime."

In his essay castigating Professor Cesarani's biography of Koestler, Raphael expands on his theme: "Cesarani deplores his subject's phallic behaviour towards women, just as we might deplore the acquiescence of the noblest Romans and Athenians in slavery. Do we not, therefore, admire the

Parthenon or read Catullus? "The abuse of women was (if it is not still) a certificate of virility in many great men, of whom Bertrand Russell is, in many respects, a more lurid and despicable example. If we are to dispraise famous men, who is to be spared?"

Raphael says that Koestler "was a hallowed figure in my youthful literary pantheon... My only personal contact with him was when I edited *Bookmarks*, a volume of essays compiled to raise funds to campaign for Public Lending Right. Already shaken by Parkinson's disease, he contributed punctually although he had warned that writing in English was still a labour. This non-sexual act of altruistic solidarity was, of course, too trivial to warrant mention by his biographer."

*Prospect's* editor David Goodhart said yesterday: "Frederic Raphael's essay is a polemical piece and I'm happy to publish it. It is provocative and we don't have to agree with every piece we publish."

## GLITTERINGLY SUCCESSFUL CONTROVERSIALIST

FREDERIC RAPHAEL lists one of his recreations in *Who's Who* as "having gardened." It could just as easily be "having caused controversy". The 67 year-old author and screenwriter is best known for his comic novel on life at Oxford and beyond, *The Glittering*

*Prizes*. But he has a number of other successful novels to his credit and has written the screenplays for a series of hit movies ranging from *Darling* and *For From the Modding Crowd* in the Sixties to the latest, still to be seen, Stanley Kubrick film, *Eyes*

*Wide Shut*. But in recent years he has become celebrated as an instigator of literary spats. He publicly accused A.S. Byatt of giving a book a good review simply because he had given it a bad one. He also launched a vicious attack on theatre director

Jonathan Miller noting how he always moved in "more exalted circles" when the two of them were friends at Cambridge. Dr Miller's wife claimed that Raphael's venom stemmed from Miller refusing a dinner invitation back in 1957.

DAVID LISTER



The author and film-maker Jill Craigie was raped by Arthur Koestler in 1951

# Lewinsky interview 'won't make Clinton look good'

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

MONICA LEWINSKY is to describe to a British television audience for the first time how she had "effectively been raped by the American constitution" during the past 13 months.

In an interview for Channel 4, to be broadcast next week, Ms Lewinsky gives a candid and "moving" account of the "Zippergate" affair.

Jon Snow, the veteran Channel 4 newsreader, has interviewed everyone from heads of state to suspected war criminals, but yesterday he admitted that he had been very nervous about meeting Ms Lewinsky.

Mr Snow spent eight hours interviewing the former White House intern at her mother's New York penthouse and said it had been a gripping experience. Although prevented by the special prosecutor Kenneth Starr from asking about the day she was arrested and detained by the FBI for 12 hours, Mr Snow said he was satisfied that he had been able to get her true story. "It was unbelievably harrowing and very moving. Her story is amazing," he said. "It ranges from the salacious to the constitutional." Mr Snow said



Jon Snow and Monica Lewinsky in New York Channel 4

they had discussed her feelings for the President then and now as well as Hillary and Chelsea Clinton. "It will not make him look any better."

Mr Snow first met Ms Lewinsky on Friday night prior to the interview on Sunday. "She was quite nervous and I think a bit wary and I was too," he said. "She had prepared very well for the interview - I glimpsed a stack of notelets that she had on the bottom of her bed and she was looking at them before [the interview]."

Despite having been through

endless questioning about her relationship with President Bill Clinton, Mr Snow said Ms Lewinsky was very spontaneous and not formulaic in her replies. "She laughs a lot, she is very emotional and thoughtful."

"When I was first asked to interview her I thought how will we sustain an hour, but I thought we could have done 24 hours and it would have been interesting," he said admitting that personally he would have been happy to pay double the \$400,000 for the interview.

But he denied that he had

fallen for Ms Lewinsky's charms: "I am not besotted. She has very obvious shortcomings that will come out in the interview. She is not little Miss Perfect."

He was, however, struck by her resilience and how well she looked under the circumstances: "She has come through hell and it would have been much more convenient for all if she had had a breakdown and ended up in a unit somewhere. She has come through an ordeal that it is impossible to conceive of."

"She had every prop kicked away because anyone who spoke to her got subpoenaed and she was exceedingly isolated."

Asked if Ms Lewinsky was bitter about the events of the past year, Mr Snow said she was fired up and bursting to tell her side of the story. "She feels incredibly aggrieved about the picture of her that emerges. I have been chastened by what I found, which was the appalling abuse of a young woman's rights, and it is very painful to listen to."

The interview will be broadcast on Thursday 4 March, at 9.30pm.

# Why Batman is really a turkey

BY CLARE GARNER

called: "Comic Book Turkeys" at the festival in Bristol between 2 and 4 April. "A fundamental problem with many comic strip characters is that they look good on the page but when you try and dress people up in those clothes they can look frankly ludicrous," said Mr Sutherland.

The second worst film was *Howard the Duck*, directed by George Lucas, who also made *Star Wars* and "should have known what he was doing,"

said Mr Sutherland. "Unfortunately the film technology wasn't as advanced enough to make a convincing duck."

Among the other films singled out for criticism were *The Fat Slags* based on characters from *Viz* magazine. "The comic, *Viz*, is fast-moving and original," said Mr Sutherland. "The fat slags were animated in clay and failed to bring life even to that medium."

*Judge Dredd* was deemed so bad that the editor of the original comic, 2000 AD, is to give delegates at Comics 99 a frame-

by-frame talk on its faults. "He will be explaining the hundreds, possibly thousands, of faults," said Mr Sutherland.

The full list is: 1 *Batman and Robin* (1997); 2 *Howard the Duck* (1985); 3 *Spawn* (1997); 4 *Judge Dredd* (starring Sly Stallone, 1995); 5 *Superman IV* (starring Christopher Reeve, 1985); 6 *Dick Tracy* (1991); 7 *Prince Valiant* (starring Joanna Lumley, 1998); 8 *The Fat Slags* (1998); 9 *The Punisher* (starring Dolph Lundgren, 1994); 10 *The Fantastic 4* (1993).

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# WITH THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

## Why Barclays are banking on a £4m man – in Business Review, the new weekly magazine section

PLUS: WHO'S THE TOP CORPORATE LAWYER – AS VOTED BY CORPORATE LAWYERS

THE INDEPENDENT  
BUSINESS REVIEWFASHION  
NEW YORK  
REPORT  
PLUS  
SECRETARIAL

THE BEST WRITING, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD JACOBSON, IAN HICK, ROBERT FISK, TERENCE BLACKER, SUSANNAH FRANKEL, BRIAN VINTER, JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID AARONOVITCH, DEBORAH ORR, THOMAS SUTCLIFFE, MILES KINGTON, STEVE ARNOLD, ANDREAS WHITTMAN SMITH

# Pressure on IRA to lift exiles ban

A CAMPAIGN to force the IRA to lift orders exiling people from Northern Ireland is being mounted in London, Belfast and Dublin to bolster the crisis-hit peace process.

Labour MPs and IRA dissidents are linking up to allow the return to the Province of the exiled men and their families as a goodwill gesture and confidence-building measure in the run-up to the March 10 hand-over of powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

"Public opinion helped to

By COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

stop the punishment beatings. We hope we can do the same with exile," said one of the campaigners.

They are hoping for a public show of condemnation for the use of exile, including a possible rock concert in Belfast, with performers such as Bono, to welcome the return of exiled men from mainland Britain.

It is believed that hundreds have been forced to flee into

exile from Northern Ireland by republican and loyalist paramilitaries since the Good Friday Agreement was signed, but nobody knows the true figures. Officially, the Government says around 1,385 people claim they were intimidated out of their homes between April and December last year, but it is not known how many were ordered to leave Ulster.

Many of those forced into exile are petty criminals or alleged drug dealers who have fallen foul of the paramilitaries

covering their community. They are warned that they will be beaten or killed if they stay. "The IRA's attitude is that the Brits can have this problem on their doorstep," said one former IRA man. Sometimes entire families have to find homes in mainland cities such as Manchester, where the Maranatha religious organisation helps resettle people forced out of their own homes. There are cases of people arriving with no friends or connections in Manchester who have been warned not to

talk to the police or press, or they will face another beating. The Maranatha organisation says it had a group of 14 to deal with. One victim said: "Northern Ireland is like Chicago with Guinness – all Al Capone and the Mafia. Money drives the people, not politics."

Harry Barnes, the Labour MP and co-chairman of the New Dialogue group, which supports the peace process, is leading the campaign to end the exile of people from Northern Ireland. The Peace Train cam-

paigners who protested for peace in the North and South of Ireland are expected to throw their weight behind the movement to end exile, and there are likely to be moves in the Irish Parliament.

Tony Blair will meet Bertie Ahern, the Irish Prime Minister, on Friday in the margins of a Euro-summit to agree the next steps towards persuading the IRA to begin decommissioning, which is threatening to stall the hand-over of powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Mr Blair, who met Gerry Adams last week at Downing Street, and Mr Ahern believe the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, has little room for manoeuvre unless the IRA is prepared to make a gesture by abandoning some of its weapons. Mr Trimble, the first minister in the Assembly, is under pressure from his party not to set up the Assembly executive with ministerial seats for Sinn Féin unless decommissioning has started.

The IRA leadership is also

under pressure from dissidents who support the armed struggle. There are continuing unconfirmed rumours at Westminster about a break-away dissident group, calling itself Continuity IRA, threatening a "spectacular" bomb attack on the mainland around 10 March to show that there will be no surrender of weapons. They are said to be more in tune with the thinking of IRA leaders than the so-called Real IRA blamed for the Omagh bombing.

## Republican nurse held over Omagh

THE CHAIRMAN of the republican 32-County Sovereignty Committee was under interrogation last night by detectives investigating the Omagh bomb outrage.

Francis Mackey, 44, was detained at the Tyrone & Fermanagh psychiatric hospital, on the outskirts of the town, where he works as a nurse, and taken to a Royal Ulster Constabulary station in Londonderry for questioning.

His home at the village of Mountfield, seven miles from Omagh, was also searched.

Family members refused to make any comment, but political associates claimed the arrest was an attempt by the British and Irish governments to silence republican critics of the Northern Ireland peace agreement.

His party is linked to the Real IRA, the dissident republican group which carried out the car bombing six months ago.

Mr Mackey's detention brought to six the number of men held in custody in Northern Ireland in connection with the atrocity.

Another three were detained yesterday in the Crossmaglen and Cullinstown areas of south Armagh in a huge security swoop which involved police and troops.

Detailed searches of homes and nearby property were also carried out.

The men are all being held at Strand Royal Ulster Constabulary station in Derry.

Three more men are being interviewed in Monaghan after raids in the border areas of the Irish Republic.

Two others held in Carrick-

By DERIC HENDERSON

macross have been released. Twenty-nine people were killed and 350 injured by the car-bomb explosion.

Mr Mackey, an independent councillor in Omagh, where he has resisted public demands for him to quit and leave the town because of his party's Real IRA connections, can be held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for up to seven days without being charged.

He split with Sinn Féin because of his opposition to the leadership's peace strategy of Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness.

Uniformed RUC officers detained him in the hospital grounds just after 8am.

A spokesperson for the Sperrin Lakeland Trust, which manages the hospital where he was detained, said: "It is our policy not to comment on individual members of the staff."

Senior RUC and Garda officers who have been involved in an unprecedented cross-border inquiry to try to track down the bombers have identified at least six men they believe were directly involved in the 15 August attack.

It is understood that they have also established where the 450lb-500 lb bomb was assembled and the route the terrorists took to transport it into Omagh from the outskirts of the town before abandoning the red Vauxhall Cavalier car in Market Street.

Mr Mackey's party insisted that the arrest was an attempt by the British government and the Republic's Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, to silence oppo-



Police officers and firefighters in Market Street, Omagh, after the car-bomb attack, which killed 29 people and injured 350

## Wright's murder 'state arranged'

THE MURDER of the loyalist leader Billy Wright was "state arranged, state sponsored and state sanctioned", his father claimed yesterday.

David Wright told an inquest into his son's death at Northern Ireland's Maze prison in December 1997 that he believed there had been collusion at the highest level.

There was tight security at Downpatrick court house yesterday for the inquest into the death of the man known as "King Rat". Three INLA men were jailed for his murder at the same court four months ago.

The Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF) leader was gunned down in an ambush by the Republicans who had scaled a wall separating their wing from Wright's. Mr Wright said that the housing of INLA and LVF prisoners in the same block was a "recipe for disaster". He also asked why security cameras had not recorded the incident and why guards and soldiers in watch towers overlooking the yard where it happened had failed to stop the shooting.

Forty witnesses are expected to be called in the course of the inquest, which is expected to last up to two weeks. In the court yesterday, the Maze's governor, Stephen Davis, explained how the killers scaled the wall and ambushed Wright as he sat in a bus waiting to be taken to the visiting block. But Mr Wright asked how the INLA could have known about the visit in advance.

The inquest heard from several prison officers who described the LVF leader's final moments. One, Joseph Flanagan, also described how the rival INLA and LVF prisoners were taunting each other.

The inquest was adjourned until today.

## IN BRIEF

### Dr Shipman: seven more charges

A GP accused of killing eight patients appeared in court yesterday charged with seven further murders. Harold Shipman, 52, of Hyde, Greater Manchester, was remanded in custody. The alleged victims were Muriel Grimshaw, 76, Pamela Nuttall, 65, Laura Wagstaff, 81, Maureen Ward, 57, Pamela Hillier, 68, Marie West, 81, Lizzie Adams, 77.

### Bread ingredient 'is asthma risk'

A SUBSTANCE added to flour to improve the quality of bread poses a "considerable" asthma risk to people working in bakeries and mills, researchers said yesterday. Alpha amylase, derived from the fungus *aspergillus oryzae*, is added to flour to speed up the baking process.

### Woman sues over HIV doctor

A WOMAN treated by an HIV-positive gynaecologist is to take legal action against a hospital which employed him. The patient treated by Olukayode Fasawe shortly before his death in February 1997, is to launch a civil damages claim for "psychiatric shock" against Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.

### Tesco strengthens sales lead

TESCO HAS lengthened its lead over rivals, confirming its position as the number-one supermarket, according to Institute of Grocery Distribution figures. It secured 15.6 per cent of grocery sales in the year to June 1998.

## MILES KINGTON

**Equity: Once a term meaning justice – now a posh word for money**

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW PAGE 2

## Britons face fines for ski slope rescue

A FRENCH prosecutor called yesterday for stiff fines and suspended prison sentences on three British businessmen who had to be rescued while skiing in a banned area during an avalanche alert two weeks ago. The court, in Albertville in the French Alps, delayed judgement until 29 March.

The three men in their 30s were rescued from the "black" (ie strictly prohibited) slope in the Val d'Isère the day after an

avalanche killed 12 people near Chamonix. The public prosecutor, Roger Ternoy, said the case had been brought "not because we want to persecute the English but because of the very real danger which the men brought on themselves and their rescuers".

Guy McBride, 38, Jonathan Fairley, 37, and Paul Growther,

35, all business executives, denied the charge of "placing the lives of others in danger". They told the court that they had strayed onto the closed piste by mistake in poor visibility.

But the prosecutor, Mr Ternoy, one of the first in France to bring criminal charges against errant skiers, said one of the men had admitted to gendarmes that they had crossed warning tapes and signs. Shortly after they were rescued from

deep snow, an avalanche was triggered nearby.

Mr Ternoy called for three months suspended prison sentences and FF5000 (around £500) fines on each of the men. "The penalties interest me less than the examples they will set and the encouragement to caution they will broadcast to thoughtless people, whether on or off the recognised slopes," the prosecutor said.

He wanted to "wring the

neck" of two mistaken ideas often repeated by skiers – that the mountains are a place of freedom, and that there is such a thing as no-risk in the mountains. "A zone of liberty is not a zone of lawlessness and irresponsibility," he said.

The three men, who had been released on bail, said that they were no more than average skiers who did not normally ski "off-piste" but had lost their way in bad weather.

Their lawyer, Maître Maurice Bodecher, called for the charges to be dismissed on the grounds that the municipal order under which the ski-slopes were closed was badly drawn up. It gave authority only for general safety precautions, not the closure of slopes. Bringing cases to "set an example" was bad justice, Mr Bodecher said. Most of the French Alps remain under severe avalanche warnings, after fresh falls of snow at the weekend.

## Fear drives woman to have breasts removed

A HEALTHY woman with no history of breast cancer in her family is planning to have both her breasts removed to ensure she has no risk of succumbing to the disease.

Liz King, from Whitley Bay, North Tyneside, has pencilled in an appointment at a private hospital in Newcastle for the double mastectomy, which will cost her £3,500. However, the British Medical Association warned that any surgeon who carried out the operation could

be in breach of his ethical duty. It is believed to be the first time a woman with no extra risk factors for breast cancer has opted for the radical preventive treatment. A handful of women with a strong family history of the disease and who are carriers of the BrCa1 gene for breast cancer have had the surgery in the past. Women who carry the BrCa1 gene have an 80 per cent

chance of developing breast cancer during their lifetime compared with less than 9 per cent for the average woman.

Mrs King, a former medical laboratory scientist, said: "A close colleague of mine died of breast cancer at the age of 40 five years ago and it hit me hard. I look on my breasts as a risk factor I can do without."

"As a woman I have a 1-in-12 chance of contracting it and because I have no children I am at a higher risk."

## Pupil is found hanged in bedroom at Eton College

AN ETON schoolboy was found hanged in his room at the Berkshire college yesterday. Two fellow pupils found the 15-year-old suspended from a cord in his bedroom shortly before breakfast time.

An ambulance was immediately called but the boy was pronounced dead and police were asked to investigate.

A spokesman for the police at Slough, Berkshire, confirmed that a schoolboy had been found hanged at Eton but

said that there were no suspicious circumstances.

The death was announced at morning assembly and lessons were continuing yesterday, although the boys were preparing for the start of their half term holiday which begins on Thursday.

The police spokesman did not name the dead boy but said that arrangements were being made to notify his parents of the tragedy. A post-mortem examination is to be carried out

on his body and an inquest will be held.

John Lewis, the headmaster of Eton, said that the dead boy had been an excellent pupil who appeared to be making good progress in his work and at games. He was in his second year.

"He enjoyed the company of others and was much respected by them. The school's sympathy goes out at this time to the boy's parents and family and his friends," he said.



THE INDEPENDENT  
FASHION  
NEW YORK  
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## On the Web, a server that crashes is a customer service problem.

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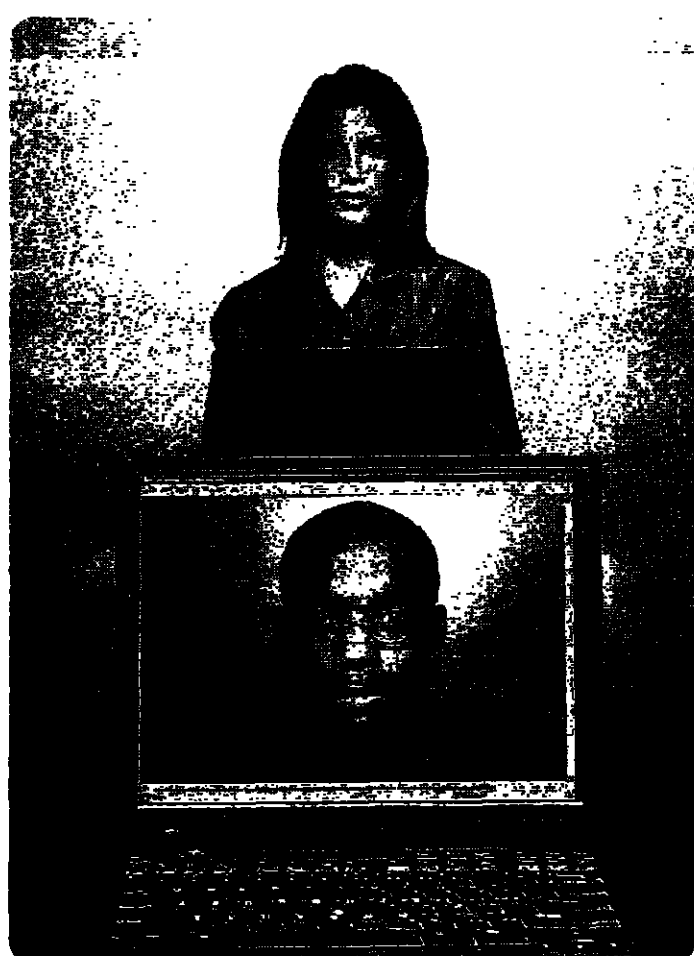


The UNIX-based IBM RS/6000 SP has powered some of the most heavily visited Web sites in history – including the Nagano Olympic Winter Games with 634,716,480 hits over 15 days.

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Several hardware companies are touting their long-term strategies for achieving 'Five Nines' (99.999% availability); IBM is already delivering.

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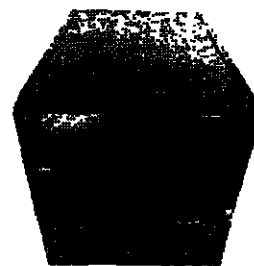
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**Read on and learn more**

## On the Web, a server that isn't scalable is a business problem.

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As a company's Web site becomes a primary source of interaction between the company and its customers, scalability and e-business growth becomes a major issue.

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The 1998 PGA TOUR Web site accommodated more information-hungry enthusiasts than anyone imagined. Handling more than 200 million page views, it attracted thousands of golf fans. The site, [www.pgatour.com](http://www.pgatour.com) with real time scoring, exclusive stores and shopping is solely powered by IBM servers.

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### Questions?

#### What e-business solutions would you like to know more about?

- ☐ How to establish a Web site.
- ☐ How to sell merchandise or services over the Web more effectively.
- ☐ How to make your supply chain more efficient and get products to market faster.
- ☐ How to use the Web to reach new markets.
- ☐ How to put your core business processes online (such as HR, competitive bidding, etc.).

#### What do you think you need to help you achieve your e-business goals?

- ☐ Strategic consulting. (How can I use e-business to help my business?)
- ☐ Technology consulting. (How do I combine new technology with my existing systems in a cost-efficient manner?)
- ☐ Expertise on how e-business can help me in my industry.
- ☐ Help integrating my networks so they run seamlessly.
- ☐ High-volume servers capable of handling millions of hits a day while conducting complex transactions.
- ☐ Help developing custom applications, intranets and extranets.
- ☐ Advice on security. (How do I protect my most vital systems while getting the right information out to the people who need it?)
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## Man of Straw is unhurt after treading on a dummy

**DURING DEFENCE** Questions George Robertson proudly announced that the British Army had laid their last landmine; all existing stocks had been destroyed, he told the House. And the last five models had been rendered harmless and handed over as macabre trophies to the bodies which had campaigned for their withdrawal. This must have been a touching ceremony, what with its ritual invocations of Diana, Princess of Wales, and the word-pictures of children gambling through virgin meadows. We should not forget, however, that there are still explosive devices out there, concealed in the most in-

nocuous by-ways, and a little later, as if to remind us of the continuing dangers, the latest victim turned up to tell the House about his accident. The morning papers had unanimously reported that the Home Secretary had trodden on a judicial landmine over the weekend, in his case a relatively innocuous device which was designed to propel egg into the face of its target at high velocity. Tory members had turned up in large numbers to gloat over the Home Secretary's injury and, if at all possible, to aggravate it. But when he rose to make his statement it slowly became clear that he wasn't even limping. The unusual pallor of

his face was not down to splattered albumen, he explained, but righteous indignation. The device in question had made quite a loud noise, he conceded, but he had not been hurt and, what's more, were he to walk that way again his foot would fall not an ounce less heavily. The charge had been a dummy.

Mr Straw seemed genuinely indignant to have been depicted as an enemy of freedom and quietly defended his actions. He had only acted, he said, out of concern for the Lawrence family (Pavlovian reflex of agreement from both sides), for the fair treatment of the police (concessionary grunts from law and

### THE SKETCH



THOMAS  
SUTCLIFFE

order Tories) and respect for the privileges of the House (sturdy hearing from Labour members and

snorts of derision from the Conservative benches). I think he might sensibly have dispensed with this last point because even though Mr Straw himself strikes me as a by-the-rules kind of chap himself, he is smart enough to know that he belongs to a government which is about as leak-proof as a saturnus bag.

It also seemed unwise of him to harp quite so much on the care and effort he had put into keeping the report secret, since the more he protected his department's integrity the more he exposed its basic competence. Following this line several Tory MPs tried to get him to say just how many people had access to

copies of the leaked report, and whether they would be sacked if they were found out, but at these points Mr Straw briefly forgot the all-important supremacy of Parliament and declined to answer. One questioner even raised the possibility that a junior minister might have been involved in this heinous breach of trust, at which point the junior ministers grinned ostentatiously to register the absurdity of the notion. I noticed that Paul Boateng smiled with particular vigour, as if the idea struck him as the very acme of hilarity.

Mr Straw was rattled enough, anyway, to get unparliamentary

with Sir Norman Fowler earning a rebuke from the Speaker, delayed only by the fact that she hadn't heard the offending remark and had to get him to repeat it before she could pass judgement. For his part Sir Norman seemed to have pulled off that entertaining trick whereby a synthetic and strategic indignation slowly converts itself into the real thing. He began by pretending to be very cross and did such a good job that he ended up genuinely so. Mr Straw, I think, travelled in the opposite direction, realising by the end of the session that his protestations that he was completely unmarked might actually turn out to be true.

## Wakeham set to hold public hearings

**LORD WAKEHAM**, chairman of the Royal Commission on House of Lords reform, gave the strongest signal so far that the it would seek to take oral evidence in public.

During a two-day Lords debate on the White Paper on the reform, he said his consultations would be as "open and forthcoming" as possible to enable "vigorous public debate". The commission, expected to report by the end of the year, will first meet on 1 March.

Government sources have privately made clear they hoped it would move quickly to analysis and recommendations on the functions, powers and composition of the second chamber in private sessions.

Lord Wakeham's reassurance came as Lord Denham, former Tory chief whip, accused his party of "inertia" over reform. "We are drifting towards the end of our life for the temporary convenience of this administration."

But Lord Wakeham spoke of an "exciting opportunity" to create a chamber which would

**LOARDS REFORM**  
BY SARAH SCHAEFER  
Political Reporter

play a "distinct and significant role...". Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank, for the Liberal Democrats, said proposals by Lord Weatherill, chairman of the crossbenchers, to retain 91 hereditary peers in the interim period gave a "substantial and disproportionate" advantage to Tory benches. Lord Rodgers said he did not want to "ridicule" what had been a genuine attempt to achieve consensus but the "situation becomes stranger and stranger" and the proposals were a "dog's breakfast".

Lord Denham, himself a hereditary peer, said of the amendment: "If this rather nebulous threat hanging over us amounts to something less than contempt of parliament, I would be very grateful for somebody to tell me why."

Opening the debate, Baroness Jay, the Lords leader, said: "We do not want to lend credence to the unicameralists,

nor to give ammunition to those who describe peers as predominantly driven by self-interest and out of touch with everyday concerns."

The Lords could have its first elected peers under Liberal Democrat plans to be debated at the party's conference next month, writes Paul Waugh.

It will hear a motion to ensure all the party's nominations for life peerages in an interim Lords will be subject to a secret ballot of senior activists.

In line with Labour and the Tories, the Liberal Democrats allow their leader simply to select their peers, and some activists want the practice to end. The move to make the interim House of Lords more democratic is one of several motions listed in the party's conference agenda, published yesterday.

The conference, which will see Paddy Ashdown deliver his 33rd and last speech as party leader, is certain to be used as a "primary" by potential leadership candidates such as Charles Kennedy and Meizies Campbell.



Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport learning how to applaud in sign language in Birmingham as he announced £53.7m in grants to help the nation celebrate the Millennium

## No way to treat a dog, say MPs

**TELEVISION**  
BY PAUL WAUGH  
Political Correspondent

**MPs CALLED** on the BBC last night to reconsider its decision to axe *One Man and His Dog* from the nation's TV screens.

Peter Bradley, MP for the Wrekin and chair of the Rural Group of Labour MPs, tabled a Commons motion attacking the "high-handed and insensitive" move to take the programme off the air.

The Early Day Motion points out that the programme attracted eight million viewers before it was rescheduled and had brought pleasure to both town and country dwellers over 23 years.

"This is no way to treat a loyal friend. This House regrets that the BBC is once again abandoning its duty to minority interests in pursuit of mass markets and calls on the schedulers to review their decision," the motion states.

Mr Bradley, whose remarks were backed by the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, at the weekend, said last night that he expected a "torrent" of cross-party support for this motion.

"It's an issue which has united town and country, left and right, old and new, Tory, Liberal and Labour," he said.

## Benefits in kind attacked

**LABOUR LEFTWINGERS** yesterday attacked Government proposals to offer asylum seekers benefits in kind instead of cash assistance. They argued that cash benefits were the "cheapest and most humane way" to help such people while they waited for their applications to be considered.

Jeremy Corbyn, the MP for Islington North, said many in the Labour Party felt such removal of benefits, when first introduced by the Tories, was an "act of spite and vengeance against refugees".

But Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, insisted the current

**ASYLUM SEEKERS**  
BY SARAH SCHAEFER

system of support was a "shambles" and radical reform was needed to help those in genuine need. Under the Immigration and Asylum Bill, asylum seekers will be given accommodation and support through vouchers for food and other essentials, instead of being able to claim social security benefits.

Opening the Bill's second reading debate, Mr Straw made clear that support would only be made available to those who were destitute or likely to be-

come destitute. Cash benefits acted as a draw to "economic migrants", especially from eastern Europe, who had no reasons to make asylum claims, he added.

Amid the heated debate on the radical shake-up of the immigration and asylum system, leaders of all the major political parties have pledged not to descend into displays of racial prejudice. The pledge, drawn up by the Commission for Racial Equality, the Refugee Council and the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees, also urges all MPs, officials, local councillors and the media to be

careful not to stir up racial tensions.

But during the debate, Diane Abbott, the Labour MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington, warned small groups of asylum seekers accommodated outside London could be "sitting targets for racist attacks" as a result of the proposals.

Mr Straw said the legislation had been drafted amid public concern about bogus asylum seekers in Britain and criminal trafficking, a global trade estimated to be worth more than £4 billion a year. It aims to fine lorry drivers carrying illegal immigrants into the UK.

### THE HOUSE



#### Defence jobs

**THERE WILL** be dire consequences for British and European defence industry jobs unless companies restructure to compete better with their giant United States rivals, the Defence Secretary George Robertson warned yesterday. "Either we rationalise or we won't have any jobs left in this very valuable and very important industry," he said.

#### Today's agenda

**Commons: 2.30pm**  
Questions to Scottish ministers and Lord Chancellor's Department.  
■ Welfare Reform and Pensions Bill, second reading.  
■ Short debate on future development of Cornish language.  
**Lords: 2.30pm**  
■ Debate on Lords reform, last day.

## Register to list suspected paedophiles

**SUSPECTED** AS well as convicted paedophiles would be banned for life from working with children under a back-bench Bill published yesterday. The private member's Protection of Children Bill, sponsored by Debra Shipley, MP for Stourbridge, would ban childcare organisations from employing anyone on a national register drawn up by the Government.

The Bill, which is being backed by the Department of Education and Employment, the Home Office and the Department of Health, will also require employers to refer to the register the names of those who have harmed children or put them at risk. It will receive its second reading on Friday and stands a reasonable chance of passing into law.

The measures would enable the Government's proposed Criminal Records Bureau to operate a "one-stop shop" so that concerned childcare organisations can make fast checks.

The Bill aims to tighten up the law following pressure from charities, schools and councils which claim there is no mechanism to report staff who quit their jobs before investigations

**CHILD CARE BILL**  
BY PAUL WAUGH

into child abuse are concluded. Many paedophiles slip through the net even though serious allegations are made against them by children.

Volunteers as well as employees would be subject to checks for the first time and an independent appeals tribunal would ensure that no innocent individual was placed on the list.

Ms Shipley said: "I have been contacted by many people and organisations who have told me about some shocking incidents that would not have happened if my Bill had been on the statute book. My bill will close many loopholes. We must go down the avenues that abusers exploit and this is a step towards that goal."

Valerie Howarth, chief executive of the charity Childline, said: "We welcome the unified list of people unsuitable to work with children as a vital step in preventing known abusers continuing to harm children."

Both Mencap and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children have also officially backed the Bill.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

#### Ulster violence

**ALMOST** 150 people were victims of paramilitary-style attacks in Ulster in the last eight months of 1998, Northern Ireland security minister Adam Ingram disclosed. Loyalists were responsible for 90 attacks - 25 shootings and 65 assaults; while Republicans were behind 59 - 19 shootings and 40 assaults.

#### Troops at ease

**BRITISH TROOPS** will not go into Kosovo if the peace talks in France do not produce an agreement "unless there is an agreement for them to supervise", George Robertson, Secretary of State for Defence, said.

#### Elderly benefit

**THE AMOUNT** of cash given by the National Lottery Charities Board last year to organisations which represent the elderly increased by nearly £40m over the year, the sports minister Tony Banks revealed.

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# 16 60,000 wild birds trapped and sent to Malta

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Three types of British wild birds which are being trapped for illegal export to the Mediterranean. From left to right, the goldfinch, the greenfinch and the linnet

BY MICHAEL MCCARTHY  
Environment Correspondent

discover RSPCA officers who targeted his activities fear he may have started to affect the level of their wild populations. The man, a 26-year-old Maltese who runs a pet and garden centre on the Mediterranean island, is believed to have

amassed a fortune by satisfying the huge demand in Malta for British cage birds. He has been able to sell wild-caught British greenfinches, for example, for up to £40 each. The man has built up a network of people in Britain who will trap wild finches, and has then been exporting the birds illegally by fitting them with

counterfeit versions of the rings they must wear to show that they were bred in captivity. It is illegal in Britain to take, sell or export a wild bird, but captive-bred birds may be traded. Over four years he has made dozens of trips to Britain in the winter, when finches flock together to seek food and are easy to catch in large numbers by

netting. The RSPCA believes he may have exported between 50,000 and 60,000 wild birds by air, mixed in with consignments of legal, captive-bred birds in an attempt to evade Customs scrutiny. But the society believes that many thousands of those captured on his behalf - as many as a quarter - have died from

stress in initial captivity or on the journey, and the remainder have been destined to a short life as pets in small cages. "Their lifespan in a small cage in Malta is unlikely to be more than three months, which is why he continually needs more," said an RSPCA source. The man was tracked and watched as he exported birds

through Gatwick airport and was finally arrested in a disused petshop in Kent, where he was found preparing to ring more than 500 wild-caught finches. The rings were inscribed with the initials BBC, as on the official rings provided for captive-bred birds by the British Bird Council, the official body. The smuggler had succeeded in obtaining them by convincing a ring manufacturer that they were needed for the Balluta Bird Club in Malta.

The man is now back in Malta, having jumped bail. But RSPCA officers say that the file on him is not closed, although they are reluctant to spell out what further action they may take. They are still investigating his associates in Britain. A spokeswoman for

the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds said that illegal trapping of songbirds, particularly finches, was still quite common in Britain. But British cage bird enthusiasts are quick to condemn the illegal trade, said Greg Meenehan, of the magazine *Cage and Aviary Birds*. "People who keep cage birds are aware that people who trap birds give them a bad name and are very opposed to anything to do with trapping or shooting," he said. "The hobby is seen by some people as cruel so they want to be whiter than white."

There is a strong tradition of keeping cage birds in Malta, but not of breeding them, so British birds, which are very successfully bred in captivity, are highly prized.

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## Killers get £1m rebate from prison

THE PRISON Service is being forced to pay back more than £1m to convicted killers and other inmates who were charged for "board and lodging" while in jail.

Four inmates, who earned up to £130 a week working on day-release jobs, sought a judicial review to challenge the policy of taking £125 a week from the money they earned to pay for their cell and food. The Prison Service was forced to climb down yesterday after its own legal advisors decided that it was unlawful to charge someone for their own imprisonment.

The decision means that thousands of prisoners who have made payments for board and lodging over the last six years will now be able to claim the money back. Many of them will have been released. The Prison Service has re-couped around £26,000 a month through such deductions and the repayments are likely to cost more than £1m.

Prisoners nearing the end of their sentence are encouraged to take part in "enhanced earning" schemes which enable them to work - usually outside of prison - and earn realistic wages. The programmes are designed to help rehabilitate prisoners into the community. Michael Howard, the previous home secretary, introduced the deductions in the belief that it was right that inmates who were allowed the privilege of earning wages should make a contribution for their upkeep.

But the policy was challenged by four inmates from Whitmore prison, near March in Cambridgeshire. John Duggan, serving life for murder, and three other prisoners, Glen McPherson, George Daly and Craig Preece, argued that the policy was unlawful. Following legal advice, Peter Dawson, acting director of regimes for the Prison Service, has instructed all governors to stop deducting the money. In a memo Mr Dawson writes: "In the light of legal advice that the decisions were unlawful (because prisoners cannot be required to pay for their own imprisonment, and cannot consent to pay for their own imprisonment) the Prison Service has conceded the cases. Prisons must now cease making deductions for board and lodging from the wages of prisoners, whether working on enhanced wages schemes in prison or outside prison on pre-release schemes."

Mark Leech, of Liverpool-solicitors AS Law, who backed the prisoners' claims, said: "Prisoners will now be able to save for their release and be in a much better position to survive financially when they do get out."

The Prison Service said that it would now bring into place the Prisoners' Earnings Act 1996, placed on the statute book by the last government but never implemented. It will be introduced early in the summer and will enable the Prison Service to lawfully make compulsory deductions.

## Fertility patients hit by beds crisis

HEALTH AUTHORITIES are cutting their funding for infertility treatment in order to concentrate on meeting government targets for reducing hospital waiting lists, according to a survey.

Across the country an average of 10.8 cycles of in-vitro fertilisation were provided by the NHS per 100,000 population in 1998, compared with 12.7 cycles in 1997. In more than half of health authorities the waiting time from referral to treatment was more than one year.

The survey, by the College of Health, shows that obtaining treatment is a postcode lottery for the one in seven couples who need it. While health authorities in Scotland provided 21.5 cycles per 100,000 people last year the figure was just 0.3

in the South West. Waiting times also vary, with some couples seeing a gynaecologist 1-2 weeks after being referred while others wait for three years.

Caroline Spelman, Conservative MP for Meriden, said: "The National Health Service should be a national service. However, the report shows this is clearly not the case."

Mrs Spelman, who led a Parliamentary adjournment debate on infertility last year, said: "Most patients are either forced to seek private treatment or contribute to some of the cost, placing couples under great financial and emotional strain."

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# Far left in bid to run rail union

MILITANT LEFT-WINGERS will today mount a challenge for the leadership of the rail industry's biggest union, after their successful campaign to win the top job at the train drivers' union.

Members of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (NMTU) will receive ballot papers for an election which could usher in a new era of militancy on the rail network and London Underground. Jimmy Knapp, leader of the RMT, and his deputy Vernon Hince, face a tough electoral battle with left-wingers.

Mr Knapp is being challenged by Greg Tucker, a far-left train driver based at Waterloo who was expelled from the Labour Party in the early Nineties for his activities as a Lambeth councillor.

In an interview with the Today programme on BBC Radio 4 yesterday, Mr Tucker indicated that there would be more disruption to services under his leadership. "I think there is a lot of frustration out there on the railways and I think that frustration should be given a lead," he said. Asked if that meant strikes, he said: "One uses the weapon one has to hand."

Mr Hince faces opposition from two left-wingers. His principal opponent is Pat Sikorski, a London Underground driver and senior activist in Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party (SLP). Also standing is Jim Connolly, a railway worker of Glasgow and a former SLP member. There is little doubt that a takeover by the hard left would increase the union's appetite for industrial action rather than negotiation.

Bob Crow, the RMT's current assistant general secretary, is a member of the SLP and the party can count on the backing of a majority of the union's rail executive.

Although traditional Labour

By BARRIE CLEMENT  
Labour Editor

Party supporters in the union argue that members at London Underground have legitimate concerns, they also believe current unrest has been fuelled by a regional council which is dominated by the hard left.

At the train drivers' union, Aslef, the general secretary, Lew Adams, was defeated in a surprise poll result last year by Mick Rix of the SLE.

To make sure that the



Jimmy Knapp (above) and far-left rival Greg Tucker



process is not repeated in the RMT, Mr Knapp's supporters have mounted a vigorous campaign and secured the support of 110 union branches, compared with 28 that back Mr Tucker. The ballot result is due at the end of next month.

In his election manifesto Mr Knapp said that he would continue the campaign to restore public ownership and oppose the privatisation of London Underground. He also promised to undertake a "root-and-branch overhaul" of the union if elected.

Mr Tucker has written that the union should reassert its own political agenda and demand the repeal of anti-union laws to "unshackle" the unions. He said yesterday: "Our members are being attacked on a daily basis. The whole way that the privatisation of the railways has taken place has meant that the individual railway operating companies need to keep profits up by driving down our members' wages and conditions."

Asked whether he was a Marxist, Mr Tucker said: "I'm a rail worker and I'm basing my position on my experience as a rail worker."

A privatised train company has been ordered to drop its 21 surcharge for telephone ticket sales and to refund affected passengers. The order to Great Western Trains came from the rail regulator, Chris Bolt, who said that the surcharge breached the company's licence.

The Great Western surcharge was introduced on 1 February and has been criticised by West Country passengers and passenger groups. Mr Bolt said yesterday: "Great Western's surcharge breaches both the spirit and the letter of the Ticketing and Settlement Agreement between the railway companies and therefore also breaches Great Western Passenger Trains' licence."

# Erotica blossoms as publishers turn on to sexy sales figures



Rowan Pelling, who revived the fortunes of the 'Erotic Review' (top left), which is to be joined next month by 'Pure' - billed as fare for 'sex-loving cosmopolitans'



A NEW magazine pitched at "sex-loving cosmopolitans" will take its place next month in Britain's burgeoning market for erotica, its launch a clear sign that the nation's appetite for sex remains unsated.

Pure will be followed by new erotic fiction imprints from two of Britain's leading publishing houses - Virgin and Little, Brown - which will focus on lesbian erotica and fetishism.

Pure will provide design-led erotica principally for the heterosexual male, according to its creative director, Mike Lake-Macmillan, and "not all that tits-out-for-the-boys Loaded, FHM stuff, which seems to do nothing more than put an actress in a bra and pants".

The magazine, he said, is looking to take advantage of an apparently increasing desire to indulge sexual whims. In November, Olympia, in west London, hosted Erotica 98, the second national fair devoted to what some are seeing as a *fin de siècle* surge in hedonism. "The fair was very successful," he said, "because it presented sexuality to Middle England, and Middle England came out to play."

Erotica is one of the publishing sensations of the decade. Erotic Review began life as an occasional and meagre newsletter from the Erotic Print Society with a print-run of 4,000 copies. In the 12 months since Rowan Pelling, a former contributor to Private Eye and GQ, took over as editor, it has metamorphosed into a monthly selling 30,000 and numbering

By RYAN WILLIAMS

Auberon Waugh, design consultant Stephen Bayley and poet Fiona Pitt-Kethley as contributors.

Virgin's success with the male erotic fiction imprint Nexus prompted it in 1993 to launch Black Lace, a list written by women for women that has sold around three million books. In May, Virgin will complete its portfolio with a lesbian imprint called Sapphire.

Little, Brown, whose imprint X Libris has topped half a million in sales, is planning a new list, X Rated, specialising in fetishes.

The driving force behind the sector's growth has been young women. X Libris and Black Lace feature dominant females who - after graphic encounters often beginning on page two - end up more powerful and self-aware. "The enlargement of the market is parallel to the growth of cigarettes in the 1960s," said John Sutherland, a professor in modern English at University College London. "It started out as a male preserve but, as with Virginia Slims in America, it has been repackaged once it was found that pornography appeals to women."

Ms Pelling does not believe the growth in erotica and erotic fiction signals a mass awakening in the nation's primal urges, simply a growing acceptance that it is normal - healthy even - to act on those instincts. "The interest in sex has always been there. It's just that now it can be explored in an above-board way."

# Police officers moonlight as nightclub bouncers

POLICE AND prison officers are moonlighting as bouncers in pubs and nightclubs, prompting fears that they could be corrupted by criminal drugs gangs.

The finding comes in a Home Office study aimed at drawing up a national registration scheme for door supervisors in England and Wales. The study has found police officers working on doors in London, Manchester, Liverpool, Leicester and the Home Counties. A team of police bouncers was found to have been looking for work as security guards at the Glastonbury festival in Somerset and other pop festivals last summer.

A network of prison officers from Merseyside has been working the doors of pubs and

By IAN BURRELL  
Home Affairs Correspondent

clubs in Liverpool. Another prison officer, based outside London, is being investigated for running a company supplying bouncers while he was on sick leave from the Prison Service.

Chief constables will be concerned about officers being compromised by the drugs gangs which operate in many clubs. They may also have to take part in their official capacity in day-time raids on venues which they work at in the evenings.

The moonlighting was uncovered by Constable Andy Smith, who was commissioned by the Home Office's Police Research Group, to carry out a year-long study of the country's

door supervisors. His report will be presented to the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers next month.

According to PC Smith, who works for Humberside Police, officers are taking a huge risk working for clubs. He said: "Police officers cannot moonlight in licensed premises. There are two dangers: they might mix with criminals and they might get injured." He said any officer who was caught would face being disciplined.

PC Smith said the motivation was purely financial. "Police officers are not as well paid as everybody thinks. They have got their mortgages and kids. Some clubs will pay £150 for two weekend shifts," he said.

Many of the prison officers working doors in the North-

west had a shared interest in body-building and anabolic steroids. One prison source said: "The problems began when police were called to a club after a fight and found that all the bouncers involved were prison officers. One prison officer got charged with hitting someone with a chair."

According to PC Smith, the registration of Britain's 100,000 door staff is a haphazard and uneven business. Only half the country is covered by such schemes. Typically, a registration badge will cost around £80 for three years.

Some door staff have to hold up to 11 separate registration badges because of the varying requirements of different local authorities.

# National gallery of all 360,000 listed buildings will go online

By CLARE GARNER

PHOTOGRAPHS OF every one of Britain's 360,000 listed buildings, including sheds, pigsties and lavatories, are to go on to the Internet as part of a multi-million-pound Millennium Festival announced yesterday.

Lottery fund distributors have pooled £100m for local and regional millennium projects across the country throughout next year. The festival is expected to provide the largest programme of celebrations mounted in Britain.

Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, announced £53.7m in grants for more than 1,000 year-long schemes, including a radio station called Youth FM, a nationwide £2.5m youth sports tournament and a children's international environmental conference.

"There is a celebration for



Stonehenge, goal for the group Menter Preseli who have won £100,000 lottery cash for their millennium journey

everywhere and a celebration for everyone," Mr Smith said at the International Conference Centre in Birmingham. From April, applications will be invited for grants of up to £5,000 each.

The listed-building photographic project, costing £3m, will take several years and, as the National Monuments Record's (NMR) Images of England web site, will become the largest free on-line picture library in the world. Volunteers

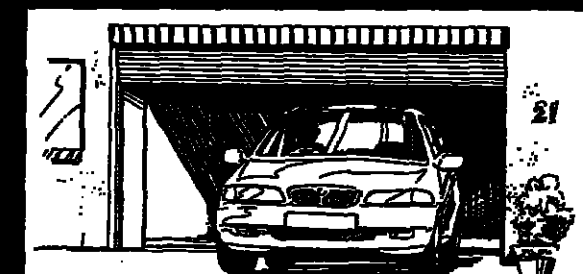
from the Royal Photographic Society will begin taking pictures in August.

Nigel Clubb, director of the NMR, said: "Images of England is about the future, not just preserving the past. We have harnessed the latest technology to bring together an extraordinary photographic record in a format which is accessible to all."

A £1.7m grant was awarded to an arts festival for Birmingham involving more than 2,000 events in parks, galleries, cafes, cathedrals, mosques, museums, nurseries and nightclubs.

A £55,000 grant went to Millennium Wildlife, an exhibition celebrating the diversity of wildlife that will tour Northern Ireland, and a group aiming to follow in the footsteps of prehistoric man by transporting a four-ton bluestone from west Wales to Stonehenge won £100,000.

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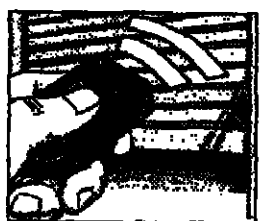
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# Obasanjo's party sweeps elections

THE PARTY of Olusegun Obasanjo, the retired general who is favourite to become Nigeria's first civilian leader for 15 years, swept parliamentary elections at the weekend. But his campaign team expressed fears over his standing ahead of the presidential poll this Saturday.

As final results confirmed that Mr Obasanjo's People's Democratic Party (PDP) last Saturday won a landslide victory in all but the south-west and sparsely populated north-west and north-east, campaigners expressed concern that his presidential challenger, Olu Falae, might make headway this week.

The PDP is widely seen as "the party of the generals" and is reportedly funded by top brass from former military regimes. Mr Falae's Alliance for Democracy/All People's Party, which is rooted in the south-

BY ALEX DUVAL SMITH  
in Kaduna

west, has fewer resources. Commonwealth election monitors said the weekend elections to the House of Representatives and Senate had passed without incident. But European Union observers reported "serious irregularities", particularly in the tense oil-producing areas of the south, including Bayelsa and Port Harcourt, where stuffed ballot boxes had been found.

However, the overall impression of Saturday's voting was of a low turn-out, especially by women. Nigeria, ruled by military dictators for all but 10 of its 39 years of independence from Britain, knows only centralisation and local politics.

In such a climate, voters may have found it hard to relate to parliamentary candidates. Also, after local and gubernatorial elections in December

and January, many feel weary of the process. Under the transition programme drawn up by General Abdulsalam Abubakar, next Saturday's presidential elections will lead to a hand over to civilian rule on 29 May.

Isyaku Ibrahim, a PDP official in the capital, Abuja, yesterday for an Obasanjo fund-raiser, said the PDP remained confident of victory but was concerned at how eastern Nigeria would vote on Saturday. "If anything, we are slipping at the moment in the east."

"It is now becoming an election which is perceived as a back-ground of boundaries drawn by the military which favour the Muslim and Hausa-Fulani-dominated north. Statistically, the north is more populous

than the south but its semi-desert nature and travellers' impressions do not bear that out. The presidential elections, in which boundaries are less of a factor, could therefore produce a result which does not reflect trends to date."

General Obasanjo, who yesterday staged a rally in Kaduna - a sedate city which is a favoured seat of retired generals - is not expected to win more than 20 per cent of votes in the populous south-west. Kaduna, however, should be a walkover. He will almost certainly dominate the centre and centre-north of the country which is Hausa-Fulani and under strong influence of traditional leaders close to the military.

Neither candidate is popular in the east. Pini Jason, a political commentator from the east, said: "We have a reputation for voting for whoever looks like being the winner."



## Nigeria great

General Olusegun Obasanjo addresses a crowd in Minna, northern Nigeria, yesterday. The former military leader is standing for president in elections next Saturday  
Corinne Dufour/Reuters



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## 'Greece fed weapons to Kurd rebels'

IT WAS exactly the ammunition Turkey's government wanted in its war of words with Greece over the capture of the Kurdish rebel Abdullah Ocalan.

A Turkish newspaper, *Hurriyet*, said he had told interrogators Greece supplied his Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) with arms. The claim may embarrass the European Union, which yesterday called on Turkey to give Mr Ocalan a fair trial and to let international observers attend, as Greece is a member of the bloc.

"Greece has supported the PKK for years," the paper quoted Mr Ocalan as saying. "Greece even helped us with weapons and rockets." According to the article he said Greece supplied him with the false Cypriot passport with which he travelled to Kenya and supplied the PKK with training facilities.

The rebel leader, who was snatched from Kenya by Turkish special forces last week, is being interrogated before his trial. Turkey blames him for 37,000 deaths in the PKK's 14-year campaign to win Kurdish autonomy in south-east Turkey. "Greece should be added to the list of countries that support terrorism and harbour terrorists," the Turkish President, Suleyman Demirel, said, according to Turkey's semi-official Anadolu News Agency. "A country like that can only be described as an outlaw state."

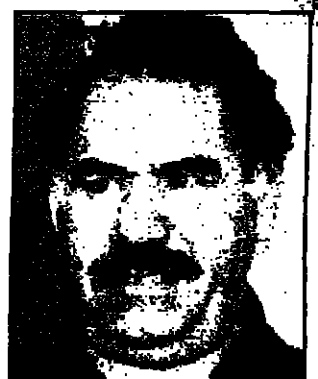
But there were sceptical reactions to the claims, which dovetail with routine Turkish government propaganda about Greece. Interrogations like Mr Ocalan's are supposed to be secret. When his former deputy, Semdin Sakik, was captured and interrogated last year, similar reports emerged claiming he had linked several prominent critics of Turkey's Kurdish policy with the PKK. No prosecutions have been brought in connection with the allegations.

*Hurriyet* has close links with

BY JUSTIN HUGGLER  
in Istanbul

Turkey's establishment. Since the capture of Mr Ocalan, who was staying at the Greek embassy in Nairobi, Turkey has turned up the heat on Greece. At the weekend the Foreign Minister, Ismail Cem, urged the EU to examine Greece's role in sheltering Mr Ocalan. Greece's new Foreign Minister, George Papandreu, urged the EU to take a strong stance on Turkey's treatment of its Kurdish minority.

EU foreign ministers were reported to be preparing a



Ocalan: Quoted as saying Greece gave PKK arms

statement calling on Turkey to ensure Mr Ocalan receives a fair trial.

Belgium threatened sanctions against the Kurdish television station Med-TV, warning it not to transmit more calls inciting violence against Turkey or Turkish institutions abroad, Reuters reports.

The Interior Minister, Luc Van Den Bossche, who summoned Med-TV to his office on Sunday, told Belgian radio yesterday: "Whenever there was trouble in recent months (Med-TV) called for calm; now suddenly they are sending a broadcast into the world calling for violence."

Med-TV transmits from Belgium with a British licence.

### IN BRIEF

#### US bombs Iraqi defence sites

AMERICAN WARPLANES bombed Iraqi military sites yesterday after being targeted by Iraqi radar in the northern "no-fly" zone, the US military said. Iraq said US warplanes attacked Iraqi defence sites in the north and south, killing one civilian in the south.

#### Earthquake hits Russia

AN EARTHQUAKE registering 5.5 on the measurement scale struck southern Russia, killing one person and injuring 20 others. The tremor hit on Sunday night, with the epicenter about 40 miles west of Makhachkala, a city on the western coast of the Caspian Sea.

#### South African crime figures rise

CAR HIJACKING in South Africa, which had dropped slightly is up again. It rose by 23 per cent - 31.3 hijackings per 100,000 people in 1997 to 35.5 in 1998. Possession of illegal weapons was up nearly 10 per cent. The rise is thought to be due to a downturn in the economy.

#### Mauritius riots over singer's death

AROUND 2,000 protesters in Mauritius went on the rampage and ransacked three police stations after a reggae singer, Kaya, who had been arrested for smoking marijuana, died in jail. He was arrested for smoking marijuana at a rally to decriminalise the drug.

Agricultural subs  
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Agriculture



Vol Boman: Detention...

Kosovo pe  
Albanians

Melting snow



Agricultural subsidies: Brussels looks like a war zone as the EU attempts to thrash out reform

## Army of farmers in violent clashes

TWELVE PEOPLE were arrested and 12 police officers injured in Brussels during violent clashes between protesting farmers and riot police yesterday, despite a massive security operation which threw a cordon of barbed wire around the heart of the Belgian capital.

More than 30,000 farmers, mostly from France, Belgium and Germany, laid siege to the city to protest about European Union agricultural reforms which they say will reduce their incomes. The protests came as farm ministers from the EU's 15 member states gathered to debate radical European Commission plans to cut guaranteed prices for cereals, beef and dairy products by up to 30 per cent to prepare the bloc for its enlargement and a new round of world trade talks.

The marchers, some of whom uprooted trees and hurled objects including firecrackers, rocks and cans, were met with tear gas and water cannon by around 5,000 riot police. Although organisers claimed around 50,000 farmers took part in the demonstration, police put the number closer to 30,000.

Even before the tear gas was fired Brussels looked like a war zone, the five-lane highway which runs through its centre blocked off with barbed wire and lined with riot police

BY STEPHEN CASTLE AND KATHERINE BUTLER in Brussels

and armoured vehicles. All the time, police helicopters hovered noisily overhead.

The Belgian police took every precaution. The entire EU quarter was sealed off, schools, shops, creches, offices and metro stations were closed, and staff of the European Commission were given the option of taking the day off. Consequently the main Commission building was deserted.

A stone throw's away, the Cinquantenaire park where the protesters gathered was ringed with police and cordoned off with barbed wire. In the biting wind and rain, speeches began as the crowds massed. In the words of one French demonstrator, unmistakable evidence of the *fraternité* of Europe's farmers. The march began with the French in the vanguard, many dressed in yellow capes, blowing shrill whistles, chanting, and spraying firecrackers around like confetti. The banners were out: "Santier tu nous enterre" (Santier you are burying us) and "Pas de pays, sans les paysans" (No country without the peasants).

Others carried black flags picturing a crossed plough and sword. "Sometimes we have to drop our ploughs and fight,"



A protester is hit by water cannon in Brussels yesterday. The city was under siege as farmers battled with riot police

Olivier

said Rudolf Bleeker, a farmer from northern Germany. As they progressed down a side street away from the Schuman roundabout, tear gas and water cannon was fired as rocks, cans and firecrackers rained in on some of the police.

Towards the back of the line of protesters, the British contingent was doing its best not to look too incongruous. Only

about 30 had made the journey, rather less than the Finnish contingent, and the group included most of the top brass of the National Farmers' Union.

"This is not normally the British way of doing things," confessed Michael Lambert, chairman of the NFU milk committee, "while European governments pay some attention to this sort of thing, the British

government usually does not." His colleague, Rod Thomas, chairman of an equally high-powered committee, agreed the "Gallic style" was rather different: "We have our own way of doing things. We are a representative contingent. The French do it their way."

Hugh Richards, president of the Welsh NFU, said he was not surprised so few had made

the journey: "They can all drive for us it means a Channel crossing." He had not, he added, considered stocking up on fire crackers: "It would be difficult bringing them through customs."

The extraordinary level of security came in for attack from Belgian farmers who claimed they were being treated "like terrorists". But it re-

flects memories of past clashes between farmers and police in the city. In early 1971, when farmers last staged a demonstration of such a size, mounted police charged rioting protesters, scores of people were injured, and one demonstrator died. In 1992, during a smaller demonstration, a senior NFU official was hit in the leg by a firecracker.

## French hit by a plague of pigs

BY MORT ROSENBLUM in Auks

THE GOOD news across France is that hunting for sanglier – the beloved wild boar – is terrific. Just about all other news related to the animals ranges from bad to catastrophic.

"They're destroying everything," grumbled Jeannot Romana, a farmer in Provence. "Wheat fields, fences, everything. It's a plague of pigs."

In one year alone, the French authorities have paid \$20m (£12.5m) to indemnify farmers and growers for "sanglier" depredations. From the Luberon to the Riviera, in the southern France, home owners report uninvited families of boar invading their land. Deep holes like bomb craters mar vegetable patches and flower beds. Electric fences won't keep them out.

Cross-breeding has added to the problem. In Auks, a mountain town north of Saint-Tropez wild pigs, breaking an age-old balance of nature, are eating up the truffles. Truffle gatherers used domestic pigs to find their treasure, quickly substituting an acorn as a reward before the pig could gobble up the profit. Boar left truffles alone.

When too much boar hunting caused a population fall a decade ago, hunters sent domestic sows into the woods to breed with the wild boar. The numbers shot up, but the hybrids love truffles.

Last year's parched summer, gatherers report, also killed off many plants that feed the boar. The animals were forced to dig deep for truffles, or anything else that they could find.

The National Hunting Office estimates the French boar population at 700,000, nine times the total 25 years ago, despite a kill of 322,000 in 1997 and an even greater number – still not tallied – in 1998.

"They tear up vineyards, gardens, crops, and you can't keep them out," said Yvon Creissac, a vintner near Montpellier, 250 miles west of Auks. He blames hunters for destroying a natural balance. A pure sanglier female had one litter a year of perhaps three piglets, but hybrids can reproduce twice a year, with up to 20 babies in all, he said.

Florence Ferte, who hunts stags on horseback and follows the plight of game closely, recently visited friends near Aix-en-Provence and found the luncheon party was increased by six. "Right there at the pool, a mother sanglier trotted up with her five babies following behind," she said. "They acted like they owned the place." (AP)

## Agricultural policy is ripped up by the roots



Nick Brown: Defending Britain's big landowners

THE ECONOMIC interests of 8 million very different individuals, ranging from the Queen down to the lowliest Greek goat producer are being fought over as European agriculture ministers go into battle in Brussels this week.

Founded at a time when memories of Second World War food rationing were still fresh, the highly wasteful Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is in desperate need of a shake up.

It costs £30bn a year, nearly half the total European Union budget, and is responsible for generating millions of tonnes of surplus beef, grain and milk which have to be dumped on

BY KATHERINE BUTLER in Brussels

world markets at a huge cost to taxpayers, not to mention the higher cost of food in our shops.

Now with big, poor agricultural nations like Poland and the Czech Republic queuing up to join, a huge crisis for the entire system of EU financing is looming. Extending the CAP with its artificially high food prices and lavish "cheque in the post" payments to countries where farming is still at the horse and cart stage would simply bankrupt the Union.

But while every EU government recognises the need to

rein in spending, no minister wants to go home on Friday telling his own farmers they have to take the biggest hit.

In Britain's case the Queen's envoys, led by Nick Brown, are negotiating to defend big landowners, such as the Queen and the Prince of Wales, against proposals for an annual ceiling on the amount of direct cash aid any one farmer can receive.

About 4,000 British farms would be hit by proposals to begin limiting subsidies once £100,000 a year has been claimed. A handful of British farms each year cash EU cheques worth around £15m. Apart from the proposed

ceiling, big farmers have little to fear from the European Commission's proposals. They would slash prices by 30 per cent but this would be good news for intensive producers capable of competing with Americans and Australians on world export markets.

But the plans are bad news for smallholders, hill farmers, the environment, food quality and the traditional European family farm.

France, the traditional champion of the CAP and its biggest beneficiary, is incensed by what it sees as Germany's betrayal. In a dramatic break with an almost four-decade-

long Franco-German alliance in defence of farmers, the government of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder is demanding that part of the cost of subsidising farmers must be borne directly by taxpayers in the member states. This proposal to devolve, or re-nationalise, part of the CAP budget would strike at the heart of the 36-year-old policy, and some say it is a pillar of the Union itself.

In an attempt to deflect the Germans, the French are countering this week with plans to curb the level of direct aid farmers would receive over time. Cutting payments would represent a dramatic shift, par-

ticularly for the French, but is now seen as the only way to mollify a German public fed up with footing Europe's bills.

As the negotiations opened last night, however, Bonn was still clinging to its demand for "co-financing", a move which seems guaranteed to provoke a French veto. With the firecrackers and chants of French farmers ringing in their ears French ministers will have enormous difficulty returning to Paris at the end of this week if they have signed up to the dismantlement of the CAP as we know it. Yet in the new climate of Euroscepticism in Germany, nothing less, it seems, will do.

## Kosovo peace talks falter as ethnic Albanians balk at disarmament

AS NEW and fierce fighting broke out in northern Kosovo yesterday, the US piled the pressure on ethnic Albanians to sign up to the proposed peace agreement and save the faltering Rambouillet conference from total collapse.

But, less than 24 hours before today's deadline of 1400 GMT, Madeleine Albright, the American Secretary of State, appeared to be making only the slowest of progress.

And without the assent of the Albanians, it is impossible to get Slobodan Milosevic, the Yugoslav President, where Washington wants him, facing a stark choice between the acceptance of Nato peacekeepers or the certainty of allied airstrikes.

There are two big stumbling blocks for the Kosovo Albanians: the plans to disarm the Kosovo Liberation Army, which has led the bloody guerrilla war against Belgrade for the last year; and the absence from the final draft document of any mention of a referendum that would guarantee the independence the Albanians are seeking. Last night General Wesley

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

Clark, Nato's supreme commander in Europe, arrived unexpectedly in Rambouillet, apparently to reassure the Albanians that they would be adequately protected by the alliance even without the KLA, and even if – as seems increasingly possible – a peace-keeping force contained a large contingent of Russians, traditional allies of the Serbs.

Yesterday Igor Ivanov, the Russian Foreign Minister, raised this very option by declaring that Russian troops could join the force if it was authorised by the United Nations and had the approval of Belgrade. But Nato's line, reiterated at the alliance's Brussels headquarters yesterday, is that the 28,000-strong force must be Nato-led and unencumbered by any type of "dual key" arrangement which fatally undermined the Western troops supposed to keep the peace in Bosnia before the 1995 accord.

The Serbs, meanwhile, continued their strategy of trying to separate the political and military parts of the deal, and play upon Western divisions over the use of force, growing more obvious as the final negotiating showdown approaches. Speak-

ing before another session with Mrs Albright yesterday, Milan Milutinovic, the Serbian President, said Belgrade might be ready to talk about foreign troops once a political agreement granting autonomy but not independence for Kosovo had been reached.

That would be the ultimate quandary for the West: what to do if Mr Milosevic signed up to the political agreement and put forward suggestions for a peacekeeping force, less directly controlled by Nato? Almost certainly Italy, and perhaps France, would oppose any airstrikes.

As the frantic diplomacy continued in France, it was fighting as usual in the southern Balkans. Yugoslav armour and KLA fighters clashed for more than three hours near Vucitrn, north of Pristina, sending hundreds of civilians fleeing for their lives.

And, in a sign that hostilities may be about to intensify, it was reported in Kosovo that the KLA had chosen Sulejman Selimi, 29, a radical hardliner, as its supreme commander.

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

If both Serbs and ethnic Albanians accept the big powers' peace plan 28,000 NATO troops would be deployed in Kosovo, and a new constitution would be introduced amid preparations for elections in nine months. Some sanctions would be lifted on Yugoslavia. Kosovo would receive international aid.

If the Albanians accept but the Serbs do not THIS WOULD open the way to

Nato air strikes against Yugoslav targets, and guarantee Nato protection for Kosovo.

If the Serbs accept, but the Albanians do not THE WESTERN nightmare. The Kosovars would be told they have to face the Yugoslav army alone, with the near certainty of massive bloodshed.

If both the Serbs and the Albanians refuse RAMBOUILLET WOULD have been a complete failure, and

the West would restart the search for a solution from scratch.

If the Albanians accept, and the Serbs say 'Yes, but...' THE TRICKIEST of all for the West. Suppose Mr Milosevic agrees to the political side, but says he wants UN, not Nato peacekeepers? The West says the package is all-or-nothing. But can we really bomb Belgrade over a dispute about who keeps the peace?

## Melting snow brings lethal floods to Germany

BY IMRE KARACS in Berlin

THE RECORD snowfalls of recent weeks in Western Europe wrought havoc in Germany yesterday as swollen rivers flooded towns along their banks. Two people were swept to their deaths, and forecasters said worse was to come.

In the past few days, water

from the melting snow has been cascading into German rivers.

The Rhine was yesterday flowing from the Alps at five times its normal February volume, and is expected to reach

the 9-metre mark today at the south German city of Karlsruhe for the first time this century.

Two flood plains which were opened up at the weekend to divert the torrent were already half full. French engineers were hoping to avert the danger by

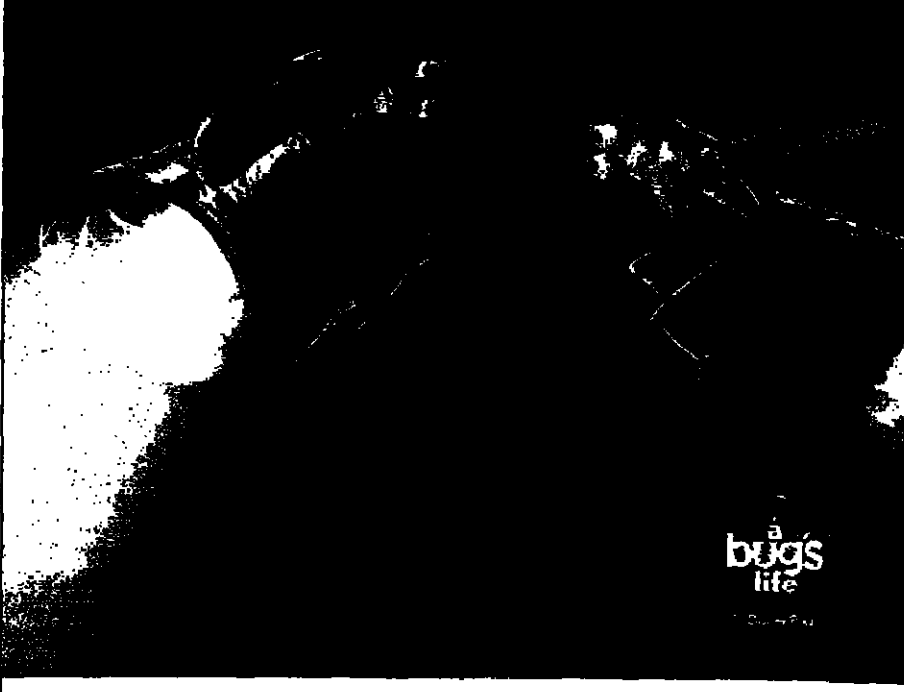
diverting some of the water to polders.

Makeshift dykes erected to protect buildings in the ancient university town of Heidelberg were crumbling under the force of the River Neckar. Streets of the wine villages of the Mosel were inundated, the

Saar burst its banks, and river traffic stopped in much of southern Germany.

Weather reports brought news of more heavy rain in Switzerland, where parts of Basel stood under water. More rain, sleet and snow is expected over south-west Germany.

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# Riding the last Russian tank out of Jalalabad

WAR VETERANS laid wreaths across Russia last Monday to mark the 10th anniversary of the completion of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. I found myself in spirit with these Russian men in their forties - from poor invalids to General Alexander Lebed - for I, too, was in Afghanistan, as a reporter on the tank convoy that started the nine-month pullout.

After the official remembrance ceremonies, I decided to call on my friend, Colonel Oleg Kulakov. He was sitting in his bachelor flat, alone except for his red setter, Richard, watching a television documentary about the war.

"Congratulations on fulfilling your 'international duty'," I said, in ironic reference to the Soviet propaganda term for service in Afghanistan, and handed him some grapes. "What is there to celebrate?" asked Oleg who, like most veterans, admits that Soviet interference in Afghanistan was a mistake. "But it's great to see you anyway. Come in. I'll put the kettle on."

Old veterans' reminiscences are boring to those who did not share the experience. Indeed, both Oleg and I have moved on since the war and neither of us dwells on the conflict. Yet, on this occasion, we both enjoyed a self-indulgent chat about operations in the Fannir Valley. Oleg got his maps out and it was as if we were back there, fighting the *dushmanti* or ghosts, as the Soviet soldiers used to call the elusive Muslim guerrillas.

Oleg grew up in Minsk. A romantic attraction to the Orient led him to Afghanistan. In 1979, he was an unsuspecting student of the exotic Dari language. Then the Politburo sent troops to Kabul. From 1980-82 and again from 1986 until the pullout, he found himself in demand as a military translator in Afghanistan.

Now he is Professor of Geopolitics at Moscow's Military University. He has not been paid properly for months, but that is nothing to a man who was injured three times in war. His wounds were all classified as "light", although one nearly cost him his sight. A bullet went through his eyebrow, missing his eye by millimetres. He was lucky. Some of his comrades were not. He still finds it painful to talk about friends who died.

For Oleg, as for me, however, the experience was not one of total horror. We both remember a country of stunning physical beauty and life will never again be as intense. I rode in the tank convoy that began the pullout from the southern city of Jalalabad in May 1988. The general in charge was reluctant to take female reporters on the trip. Only later did I realise why. We had to pass through the Black Mountains, which were in the hands of the mujahedin who would not guarantee safe passage. We could not stop. The men urinated merrily from atop the moving tanks but we women had to endure. It took our minds off thoughts of mortality.

This was mild discomfort and slight risk, of course, compared with what Oleg went through, translating in the heat of battle. He knew Pavel Grachev, the former Russian defence minister, during the war and was a close friend of Ruslan Aushev, now President of the Caucasian region of Ingushetia. But when Oleg came home, nobody wanted to hear his stories. "It was hurtful," he said, "but it was easier for me as an officer than for the ordinary soldiers. Theoretically, I knew I should expect indifference."

He knows better than to hope for financial help from the bankrupt Russian state. "I must rely on myself. I'm building up a business, doing translations for private clients."

From time to time he speaks at international conferences on Afghanistan. "We should not forget Afghanistan. Since the Taliban came to power, Afghanistan has become a black hole. It is a danger to our common security."

HELEN WOMACK

## Seoul to free Cold War 'spy' after 40 years

MORE THAN 40 years after his capture as a Communist soldier, the world's longest-serving political prisoner will be released this week in an amnesty announced yesterday by South Korea.

Woo Yong Gak will be among 1,500 prisoners freed on Thursday to mark the first anniversary of the inauguration of the South Korean President, Kim Dae Jung. More than 7,000 others will receive pardons and the restoration of their civil rights.

"The amnesty was granted to create harmony among the Korean people and give an opportunity to everyone to participate in an effort to help the economy recover," said South Korea's Justice Minister, Park Sang Cheon, when making the announcement.

Woo, 71, was a North Korean soldier when he was captured in a military boat off the east coast of the peninsula in July 1958, at the height of the Korean Cold War.

He was sentenced to life imprisonment for spying. He might have expected parole after 18 years but he belonged to a group of political prisoners known as "the unconverted", who refused to renounce Com-

munist. The six men arrested with him have died or been released, but since his late twenties Woo has been kept in isolation.

He says that after his arrest he was tortured, first by being held in a freezing underground chamber, later with electric shocks. He has had few visitors during his four decades in prison, but religious leaders and human-rights activists who have met him say he suffers from facial paralysis and speech impairment as the result of a stroke.

Like the 17 other long-term prisoners who will also be released on Thursday, Woo could have gained his liberty a year ago when the newly elected President Kim, a former democracy activist who was himself imprisoned for political crimes by South Korea's former military dictators, announced his first amnesty.

But even then there was a condition: to claim amnesty, prisoners had to sign a document promising to obey South Korean laws, including, by implication, the country's anti-Communist legislation. The

condition, intended to placate South Korean conservatives, disappointed many of President Kim's own supporters. Woo and the 17 others refused to sign, and yesterday were granted unconditional amnesty.



Ambulance officers tending to a victim following the fatal shooting in Wollongong yesterday

Andy Zakel

## 'Random' shooting kills man, injures 8

BY JAKE LYNCH  
in Sydney

AUSTRALIAN POLICE are hunting a gunman who killed one man and injured eight people, including a nine-year-old boy, in a high street.

The man walked down a crowded shopping street in Wollongong, 85 miles south of Sydney, yesterday afternoon before firing a shot gun twice. Witnesses said they saw one man lying face down on the pavement with injuries to his back. Other people were hit by pellets and flying glass.

Ambulances took seven people to hospital. Doctors pronounced one man dead on arrival. Police said the victim was 33 and lived locally.

The killer got into a white Toyota Landcruiser, which sped off, driven by a second person. Commander Jim Baillie said that the gunman had stubble on his chin and wore khaki trousers.

The shots were fired outside the Regent Cinema. Police said that as far as they could tell the attack was random and they knew nothing about the dead man which might have made him a target. "We have got no information to give us a motive at this time," Commander Baillie said. One man was detained for questioning shortly after the shooting, but police said he was not being treated as a suspect.

Police are currently searching for the gunman and the vehicle involved in the shooting.

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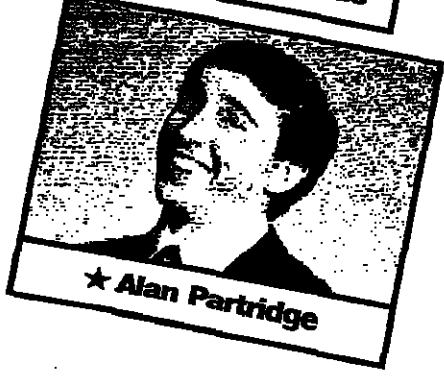
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# BUSINESS

## BRIEFING

**Levi to close 11 US jeans plants**  
LEVI STRAUSS & CO, the San Francisco jeans giant, is to close 11 of its 22 North American manufacturing plants and lay off about 5,900 staff following poor results.

The company said the closures were part of a series of strategic steps by its American division to improve its competitiveness by moving its manufacturing operations overseas, where labour costs are lower. The move comes a week after Levi, which also owns the Dockers brand of clothing, reported a 13 per cent slump in sales from \$6.9bn to \$6bn last year, largely as a result of weak sales of jeans.

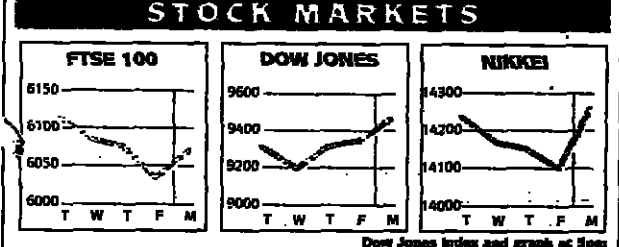
It said shifting manufacturing out of the US and Canada would lead to greater flexibility and lower costs. "These steps are crucial if we are to remain competitive," said John Ernatinger, president of Levi Strauss in the Americas.

**Air France shares rise 15% in debut**  
AROUND 2.5 MILLION investors who bought Air France shares saw them rise 15 per cent in value yesterday as the airline made its market debut on the Paris Bourse after its partial privatisation by the French government.

The 20.7 per cent stake offered for sale to investors closed at 16.10 euros, valuing the entire airline at \$3.15 billion euros. The French government promised to sell the stake in exchange for European Commission approval for a 20 billion FrFr rescue package for the ailing national carrier. Nearly 2.5 million individuals bought shares in float. In Milan, Alitalia shares were suspended before the official opening following renewed talk of a link up with Air France, which would also include Alitalia's partners KLM and Continental. KLM has denied the rumours.

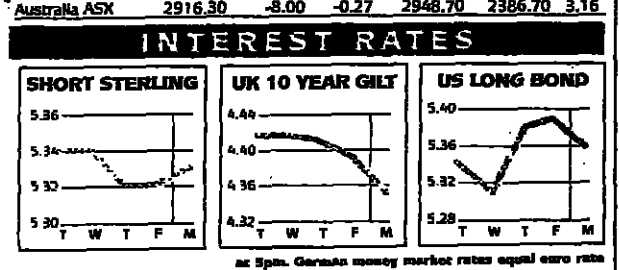
**First National to cut London jobs**  
AROUND 180 jobs are to go at the London offices of First National Bank of Chicago as a result of a decision in the wake of the bank's merger with rival Bank One last year to pull out of the over-the-counter derivatives market.

The bank intends to concentrate on servicing large US corporates or Europeans with substantial US operations. The bank currently employs 500 staff. The bank is also cut-

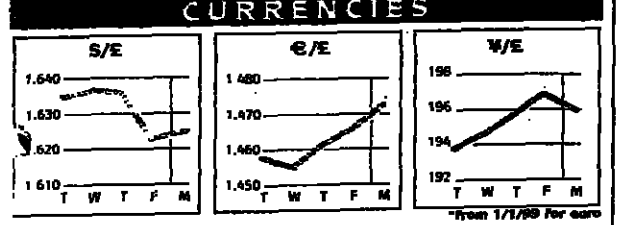


**INDICES**

Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	6069.90	38.70	0.64	6195.60	4599.20	2.62
FTSE 250	3180.70	7.60	0.15	3270.90	2210.40	3.22
FTSE 350	2875.70	16.20	0.57	2969.10	2210.40	2.72
FTSE All Share	2779.97	15.27	0.55	2886.52	2143.53	2.76
FTSE SmallCap	2225.60	6.50	0.29	2793.80	1834.40	3.58
FTSE Fledgling	1231.30	3.40	0.28	1517.10	1046.20	4.40
FTSE AIM	821.90	1.90	0.18	1146.90	761.90	1.18
FTSE Europe 100	2068.50	42.09	1.95	2072.27	1971.15	2.12
FTSE Europe 300	1221.53	17.03	1.41	1332.07	880.63	1.98
Dow Jones	9456.18	117.83	1.25	9647.96	7400.30	1.64
Nikkei	14256.67	158.63	1.13	17352.52	12787.90	1.02
Hang Seng	9229.34	-24.78	-0.27	11926.16	6944.79	3.80
Dax	4845.18	42.80	0.89	6217.89	3833.71	1.75
S&P 500	1258.17	18.08	1.46	1283.64	923.32	1.26
Nasdaq	2314.01	28.40	1.25	2333.44	1957.09	0.71
Korea Comp	543.50	52.06	0.81	7837.70	5320.90	1.64
Brazil Bovespa	9063.82	50.67	0.56	12339.14	4575.69	6.84
Belgium BeX20	3444.94	28.84	0.84	3713.21	2681.22	2.06
Amsterdam AEX	528.31	10.58	2.06	600.65	366.58	1.95
France CAC 40	4165.86	35.38	0.86	4404.94	2881.21	1.94
Milan MIB30	35497.00	1113.00	3.24	39170.00	24123.00	1.15
Madrid IBSX 35	8945.50	104.30	1.06	10892.80	6869.50	1.71
Hong Kong	8218.47	-21.06	-0.42	9581.70	7372.57	1.50
S Korea Comp	508.49	-13.69	-2.62	651.95	277.37	0.11
Australia ASX	2916.30	-8.00	-0.27	2948.70	2386.70	3.16



MONEY MARKET RATES					BOND YIELDS			
Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 Year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	5.44	-2.13	5.28	-2.25	4.95	-1.61	4.37	-1.56
US	5.00	-0.63	5.25	-0.42	5.04	0.54	5.36	0.94
Japan	0.27	-0.59	0.30	-0.51	1.85	-0.05	2.94	0.42
Germany	3.08	-0.43	3.03	-0.72	3.88	-1.08	4.82	-0.72



**POUND**

Index	Close	Change	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6247	+0.18c	1.6450
Euro	1.4723	+0.75c	1.4079
Yen	195.53	-0.66	210.64
Index	101.90	0.00	104.90

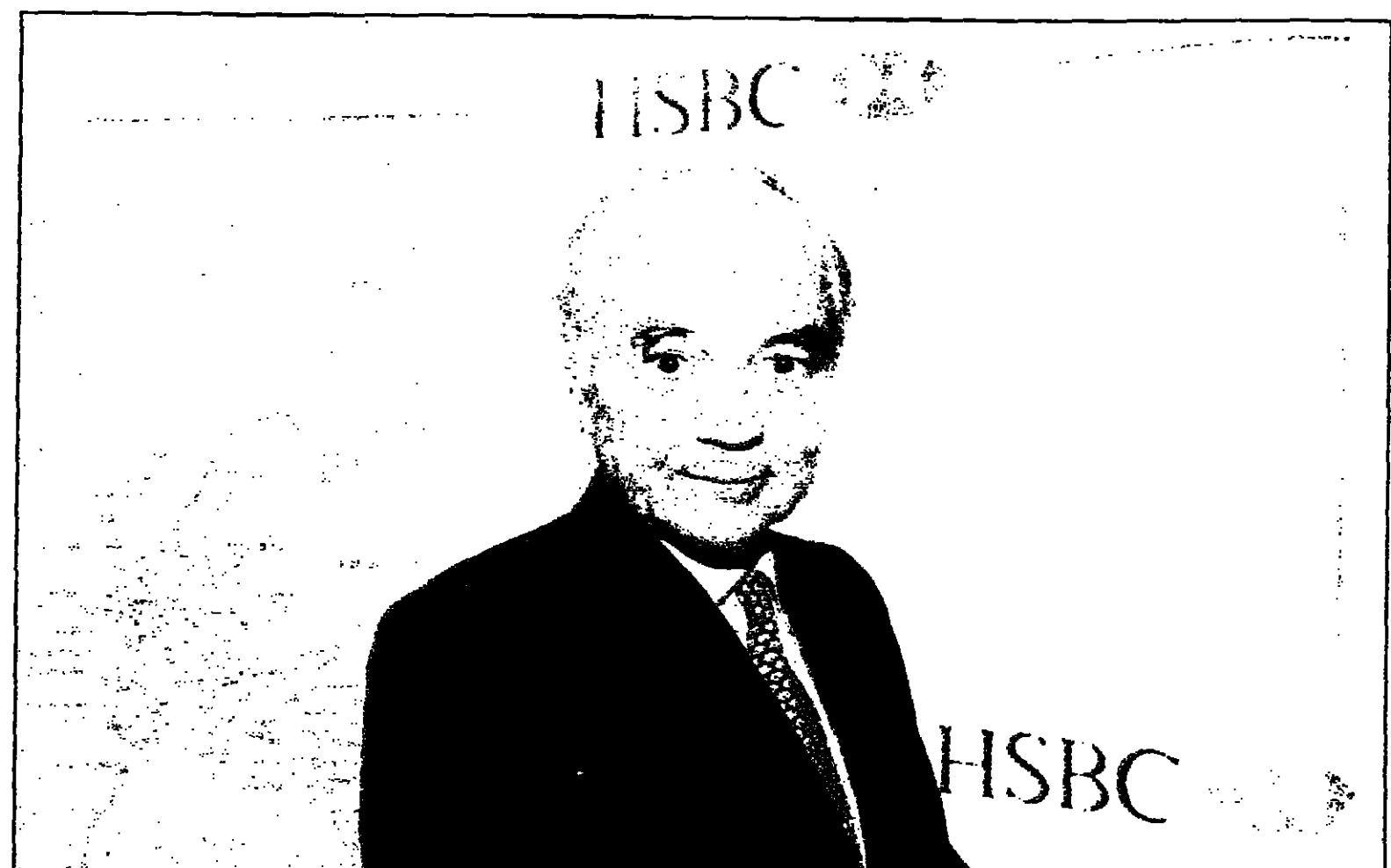
**OTHER INDICATORS**

Index	Close	Change	Yr Ago
rent Oil (\$)	10.11	0.83	13.57
Gold (\$)	287.35	-0.90	-
Mer (\$)	5.58	-0.03	6.76

**TOURIST RATES**

Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.4592
Austria (schillings)	19.59
Belgium (francs)	57.58
Canada (\$)	2.3528
Denmark (krone)	0.8236
France (francs)	10.66
Germany (marks)	8.5002
Greece (drachma)	9.3587
Italy (lire)	2.8002
Japan (yen)	459.92
South Korea (won)	12.19
Spain (pesetas)	1.1211
Sweden (krona)	61.85
Switzerland (francs)	6.0965
Thailand (bahts)	27.73
Turkey (liras)	193.84
USA (\$)	5.9131
Yen (yen)	0.6144

## HSBC profits slump by 19% as Asian crisis hits



John Bond, group chairman of HSBC, yesterday: 'The year ahead promises to be another challenging year'

**PROFITS AT HSBC** slumped 19 per cent to \$6.57bn last year as worsening problems in Asia forced the world's biggest bank to raise its bad debt provisions by \$1.62bn to \$2.64bn - its highest level ever.

John Bond, the HSBC chairman, said the bank was badly hit in the second half by problems in Malaysia and in Hong Kong, where he is predicting zero growth this year.

He said that while he remains confident of Asia's prospects in the long term, he could not rule out the possibility of "further setbacks" this year.

The bank has also witnessed a sharp deterioration in its loan portfolios in Thailand and Indonesia, although in Korea, where the group yesterday sealed a \$900m deal to buy

control of Seoul Bank, HSBC believes the worst may now be over.

Mr Bond said: "The year ahead promises to be another challenging year and much will depend on the performance of the US economy and its ability to continue a remarkable record of sustained growth."

In Hong Kong new specific provisions rose by \$699m reflecting the collapse in the property market. For Asia-Pacific generally, provisions were increased by \$1bn to cover exposures to large corporates in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand.

HSBC announced plans to seek a New York listing in ad-

dition to its current dual listings in London and Hong Kong. The bank is also scrapping its two-tier share structure and replacing the current Hong Kong dollar and sterling shares with one class of US dollar denominated stock. HSBC will, for the first time in its history, be seeking authorisation to buy back its shares.

HSBC yesterday denied suggestions that the decision to go for a US quote signalled that the bank was floundering up for a major American banking deal.

Mr Bond said the New York listing would give the bank access to the largest pool of capital in the world and enhance the liquidity of the bank's shares.

HSBC has suffered considerable share price volatility in the past because of technical shortages in Hong Kong dollar

## Hill sale loses Warburg £7m in fees

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA AND NIGEL COPE

**WARBURG DILLON** Read, the City investment bank, will lose broker fees of £7m in the embarrasing failure of the flotation of William Hill, the UK's second largest bookmaker.

Warburg had not looked for a buyer after the issue ran into weak institutional interest. The inaction prompted Nomura, the Japanese bank which owns the bookmaker, to take the initiative and sell William Hill to Civen and CVC, the venture capital groups, for £25m.

The deal was clinched on Saturday afternoon by Guy Hands, head of Nomura's Principal Finance Group, with the help of Schroders, a rival merchant bank.

Mr Hands, who bought William Hill from the ailing conglomerate Brent Walker for £730m in 1997, phoned Civen from his holiday in Barbados and informed Warburg of the sale minutes before the public announcement.

Warburg was the lead manager of the issue, sharing the £3m total commission with Deutsche Bank, Cazenove and BT Alex Brown.

Weak support forced an offer price cut to 135p from the original 155p to 175p. The new price, valuing William Hill at £780m including debt, did little to boost City interest in the shares and the float was pulled.

Insiders said Warburg was likely to get some payment from Nomura, "much less" than the original fee. They said the bank did not look for a

## EC tells Mobil to quit BP deal

**THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION** will order Mobil to sell its share of a joint petrol-retailing venture with BP Amoco in return for approval of its \$86bn merger with the rival US oil giant Exxon. The 30 per cent stake is worth an estimated \$2bn.

The decision by Brussels is likely to play into the hands of BP Amoco which would clearly like full control of the joint venture.

It was widely expected that Exxon-Mobil would be forced to dispose of its share in the joint venture following last year's merger announcement.

The BP-Mobil joint venture has an estimated 11 per cent of the European petrol market. With Exxon, the two groupings would control 20 per cent of the market, giving rise to a situation where competition could be compromised.

EC officials are thought to have been concerned about the 80 per cent share of the German natural gas market that Exxon-Mobil would command if the deal were allowed to go

## Confident G7 pushes dollar to record high

**THE DOLLAR** hit a record high against the euro yesterday, and soared to a two-and-a-half month high against the yen, after Group of Seven ministers appeared unconcerned at the US currency's recent strength.

The surge in the dollar also benefited the pound, which hit a new high against the euro in early London trading. Currency dealers had feared that finance ministers from the world's seven leading industrialised nations - who met in Bonn on Saturday - would hint that they would like to see the dollar weaken. But the communiqué released after the summit reaffirmed current exchange rate policy, namely to "promote exchange rates among major currencies that are in line with economic fundamentals".

Paul Meggyesi, currency analyst at Deutsche Bank, said: "The perception is that the G7 is happy to see a stronger dollar."

The dollar was also boosted by speculation that Alan Greenspan, chairman of the US Federal Reserve, could hint at higher interest rates in his bi-

annual Humphrey Hawkins testimony, which begins today.

The US currency hit 122.53 yen, a two-and-a-half month high, before falling back to 120.44 amid late trade profit-taking.

Comments from Eisuke Sakakibara, the Japanese finance official known as "Mr Yen" for his impact on currency markets, also helped push the dollar lower. Mr Sakakibara said the yen could rebound later this year. The dollar reached a record high against the euro, hitting \$1.096 in morning trading in London. The euro, which has been undermined by persistent concerns about European growth, has now fallen by more than 6 per cent against the dollar since the start of the year.

The strength in the dollar also benefited the pound. Sterling closed at 67.98 pence to the euro, just off its day's highs. But analysts said the pound's strength was unlikely to be sustainable, given the weak short-term outlook for the UK.

Two new studies out yesterday suggested the UK economic slowdown could soon be past its worst. The NTC Research leading indicator of economic activity registered a small increase for the fourth successive month, suggesting that growth will start to recover by the end of the year.

The Credit Card Research Group also said credit card expenditure reached £9.5bn last month, 13 per cent up on January 1998.

## HAUNTED BY £20 DOUBLE

**WILLIAM HILL** could be forced to pay out £275m if the 90,000 punters who have missed its stock-market flotation win one of the most difficult bets of the racing season.

The bookmaker has given each retail investor who subscribed for the listing a £20 voucher to bet a "Spring Double", on the Grand National and the Lincoln Handicap.

William Hill yesterday quoted the odds for the two favourites to win - the most likely event - at 152-1. A correct £20 bet on the two horses - Double Thriller at the National and Right Wing at Lincoln - would net a shareholder over £3,000.

Such a win is "nearly impossible", say experts, but given the potential payout William Hill would lay off some of the risk.

buyer because it had been hired to carry out the float and not to sell the bookmaker. Warburg declined to comment.

Different action was taken by Dresdner Kleinwort Benson in the float of the supermarket chain Somerfield, in August 1996. The broker was twice forced to cut the issue price due to weak institutional demand.

Then Kleinwort Benson approached other potential buyers such as Tesco and Safeway to see if a higher price could be achieved.

In that case, no other bids were forthcoming, which demonstrated that the issue price, even in its reduced form, was the best that could be achieved in the market.

## AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

**LONDON**  
NEW YORK encouraged Footsie to move higher. The blue chip index ended 38.7 points up at 6,069.9 after spending much of the session in negative territory. Supporting shares also made headway.

It was, however, a lacklustre session with trading falling below recent high levels. Hopes of a share buy-back of up to £2bn lifted Unilever, the Anglo Dutch detergents and foods giant, 42p to 825.5p and British Aerospace recovered some of last week's loss with a 19p gain to 421p.

**NEW YORK**  
**TAKEDOVER FEVER** sent US stocks higher, with the Dow Jones up 138.95 points at 9,479.9 by lunch-time yesterday.

Investor sentiment was boosted by news of two major takeover deals. United Technologies, the jet engine manufacturer, said it would pay \$4.3bn for the aerospace parts maker Sundstrand. Sempra Energy, Canada's largest natural gas company, announced plans to buy KN Energy, a US gas company, for \$5bn.

**TOKYO**  
TOKYO STOCKS closed sharply higher, amid hopes that the yen's slide against the dollar would take the pressure off Japanese exporters. The Nikkei 225 index closed up 158.63 points - or 1.13 per cent - at 14,256.87. Traders expressed relief that G7 finance ministers did not hint at actions to boost the Japanese currency at their weekend summit.

Global manufacturers were among the major gainers, with Honda up 3.28 per cent and Canon up 1.72 per cent.

**HONG KONG**  
HONG KONG stocks closed marginally lower, with investors cautious ahead of HSBC's annual earnings announcement.

The banking giant HSBC, which reported a 19 per cent drop in pre-tax profit shortly after the Hong Kong market closed, is a major constituent of the benchmark Hang Seng share index.

Yesterday, the Hang Seng closed 24.75 points, or 0.27 per cent, lower at 9,228.34.

**MILAN**  
THE MILAN bourse outperformed all other European exchanges yesterday, with the market boosted by news of a \$59bn takeover bid for Telecom Italia, Italy's largest telecoms company, by Olivetti, its smaller rival.

The Milan Mib30 index ended 3.24 per cent higher at 35,497. Shares in Telecom Italia soared 9.05 per cent to 9.86 euros, just below Olivetti's offer price of 10 euros.

Olivetti shares dropped 6.68 per cent to 3 euros.

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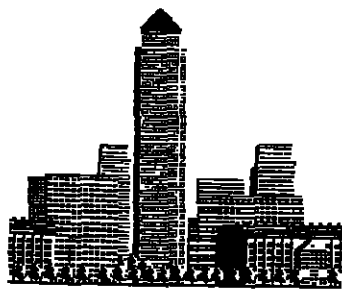
# Warburg rides into a spot of poor form

THE COLLAPSE of the William Hill flotation is said in the City to have done the reputation of Guy Hands and his employer, Nomura, no good - though it is hard to see what can be wrong with selling out to venture capitalists for more than could have been achieved through a share listing.

But there is another investment bank whose image has also been left badly tarnished by the affair: Warburg Dillon Read, which acted as Nomura's adviser, is said to be hopping mad that its client pulled a financial buyer out of the hat just as it thought it had got the flotation safely away by cutting the offer price from 175p to 135p.

It is easy to see why relations between Finsbury Avenue and St Martin's Le Grand might be strained. Warburg has just kissed goodbye to the best part of £7m in fees while Nomura would have been £45m worse off if it had gone ahead and floated William Hill at the offer price of 135p secured by Warburg.

The recriminations, needless to say, are flowing nicely. But on this occasion, it looks like Warburg which is mainly in the wrong. The defence



## OUTLOOK

from the Warburgs camp is that its letter of engagement required it to advise on a flotation of the business, not a trade sale or any other kind of auction.

The first, evidently, that it knew of Cinen's preparedness to pay the equivalent of 150p a share was minutes before William Hill actually changed hands on Saturday afternoon. To make matters worse, the venture capitalists had indicated their interest in buying the business at a higher price the previous Thursday night, after the offer price had been fixed. This merely begs the

question as to why Warburgs was not in receipt of the same facts. It says it was not told by its client. But did it not have a duty to its client to test the market to establish whether a better deal was on offer?

This is what Kleinwort Benson did when the flotation of the supermarket chain Somerfield had to be scaled back in price, not once but twice. As it happens none of the trade buyers contacted were interested.

So why did Warburgs fail to undertake such an exercise? Was the smell of the fees too much to resist? Or perhaps Warburgs was merely doing the decent thing by the army of private investors who had piled in for four times the number of shares initially allocated to them?

## Fund managers

IN THEORY, there shouldn't be any surprises in the Budget since it was all meant to have been curtain raised in the Pre-Budget statement last November. In practice, the Budget wouldn't be the Budget without some rabbits to pull out of the hat, so the

traditional season of pre-Budget leaks (for which read guess world is already well underway. Without the good ship Charlie Whelan, the Chancellor's former press secretary, to help out, the press is even more at sea than ever.

Strangely, there is a part of the pre-Budget statement that hasn't yet been recycled as today's exclusive. This is the part that deals with the Government's concern over the relationship between institutional investors and their clients. The Chancellor believes that the root of Britain's poor productivity problem lies with its long history of under-investment. This in turn may be partly caused by City short-termism. Mr Brown believes.

No Labour Chancellor these days would be naive enough to think he could force the City not to be short-termist, but Mr Brown does believe much can be achieved by obliging fund managers and pension fund trustees to set out publicly their objectives, how they assess investment performance, and the basis on which key staff are remunerated. On remuneration, the idea would be to

establish whether indeed there is an inbuilt incentive in the way fund managers are paid to short-term performance at the expense of long term.

All these ideas have plenty to commend them. Anything that can make the process of how our pensions and savings are invested on our behalf by others more transparent must by definition be a good thing. Quite how to achieve this, or whether it would have the desired effect, are rather different questions. The Chancellor would prefer the industry to put its own house in order, and he will be urging fund managers and pension fund trustees to set up something akin to the Hampel committee on corporate governance and executive pay. If they refuse, there's always the big stick of legislation to wave at them.

However, this is difficult territory. It is not clear, for instance, that forcing pension funds to disclose that they do not invest in business start-ups will much improve the situation while expected returns from British start-ups are so lamentably poor. Nor is it easy to quarrel with the

three year investment horizon most pension funds apply to the management of their money. Pension fund clients cannot reasonably be blamed for wanting to change their investment manager if after three years he is still underperforming his peers. To allow more grace might be to encourage continuing underperformance. As can be seen, these are complex issues, and they are not likely to be properly addressed by over-hasty action.

## Cable & Wireless

IT IS not quite true to say that in the space of two years Graham Wallace has gone from running a Happy Eater on the A1 to commanding one of the biggest companies in the Footsie. But it is not that far from the mark. His meteoric rise from chief executive of Granada's restaurant division (that's, er, Little Chef) to chief executive of Cable & Wireless, shows that nice guys do not always come second.

Now that he has reached the top of the greasy telegraph pole, Mr

Wallace seems intent on making his employers recognise the value of his abilities by sticking out for the kind of pay package enjoyed by his more carnivorous predecessor, Dick Brown.

His track record at Cable & Wireless Communications, entitled Mr Wallace to start with some credits in the bank. In his two years at the helm, its market capitalisation has more than doubled. Furthermore, however much he asks for, it will doubtless be a fraction of the sums the Americans interviewed for the job by the C&W chairman Sir Ralph Robbins would have demanded. But as with any internal appointment, particularly one as big as this, there is always the nagging question of whether C&W has settled for second best. If the job is so good, why could Sir Ralph not appoint a successor from outside?

So Mr Wallace will have to deliver a lot. His motto for now is steady as she goes. But if he wants to achieve the same feat with the C&W share price as he did at CWC, can he resist the temptation of the megamerger?



Graham Wallace outside the Cable & Wireless offices in London yesterday; the new chief executive said he would 'be sticking out for a competitive package' Tom Craig

## C&W chief holds out for US-style package

GRAHAM WALLACE, who took over yesterday as the new chief executive of Cable & Wireless, is holding out for an American-style pay package similar to the one earned by his predecessor, Dick Brown.

Mr Wallace, formerly chief executive of Cable & Wireless Communications, said that he had not yet finalised his terms and conditions with the C&W chairman Sir Ralph Robbins. "I will be sticking out for a competitive package. You can make what you like of that," he added.

The promotion to the top job at C&W, the majority shareholder in CWC with a 53 per cent stake, could see him double his salary. Before joining CWC two years ago he was chief executive of Granada's services and restaurants division.

Mr Brown, who quit C&W in December to return to the US as chairman and chief executive of the computer giant EDS,

BY MICHAEL HARRISON  
Business Editor

earned £1.16m last year. He also received £200,000 under the company's long-term incentive plan and would have received additional deferred bonuses worth £1.67m had he stayed with the group until April 2001.

Mr Wallace earned £567,834 last year as chief executive of CWC, including a bonus of £165,000. He also received 35,132 shares under the company's long-term incentive scheme, currently worth just under £245,000.

Mr Wallace said yesterday that he intended to stick broadly to the strategy set out by his predecessor but that under his leadership C&W would accelerate its investment in Internet and data traffic. Last year C&W bought the transatlantic Internet business of MCI and has since

acquired Net service providers in Germany and Hong Kong. Mr Wallace said the next 12 months was likely to see similar deals. C&W also intended to co-ordinate its global, Internet and data activities more closely.

He said there would be more investment in the US but C&W was not actively looking for a mega-merger partner across the Atlantic, nor was it interested in entering the auction for Telecom Italia.

Mr Wallace added that further consolidation was likely in the cable industry and that there would be "some logic" to CWC acquiring Telewest.

Commenting on the repeated speculation that C&W would buy out Media One of the US, its 50 per cent partner in the mobile telephone venture, One2One, he said C&W had several options. It was not "imperative" to take 100 per cent control.

Outlook, this page

## Jarvis Porter to close plants in £7.5m shake-up

JARVIS PORTER, the Leeds-based label and printing company, announced a restructuring programme costing £7.5m over a 12-month period, writes Clifford German.

It will include the closure of several operations in the UK and Europe with the loss of 330

jobs, about 20 per cent of the labour force.

No details of the closures or redundancies were revealed yesterday while workers in the plants affected were being told the news, but operations in Leeds, Glasgow, Nottingham and Leicester could be affected.

The company also issued a profit warning, blaming poor trading conditions especially in the drinks and beverages division which prints labels for up-market drinks bottles.

Sales have been badly affected by the economic downturn in Asia, destocking in the

drinks trade as a result of the merger of Grand Met and Diageo and, until recently, the strength of sterling.

Pre-tax profits for the year which ends next week will be around £5m before exceptional costs.

But it is not yet clear how

much of the costs of the restructuring programme will be taken in the current year.

The shares, which had staged a slight recovery in recent weeks after falling 60 per cent between March and December last year, fell 10p to 93.5p yesterday.

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## Panel dismisses GUS complaints against Argos

THE TAKEOVER PANEL yesterday unanimously dismissed the remaining complaints registered by Great Universal Stores regarding claims made by the former Argos team during its successful £1.9bn bid for Argos last year.

The move follows a similar ruling last month under which the panel universally dismissed a GUS appeal against certain procedural rulings of its executive. It means Lord Wolfson, the GUS chairman, is unlikely to take the issue any further. However, he is currently on holiday and was not available for comment yesterday.

There were three outstanding complaints made by GUS. It was unhappy about claims made by the former Argos board on its plans for a home delivery service and a comparison of trading in its fledgling Dutch operations with those in Ireland. It was also unhappy about a success fee payable by Argos to Schroders, its financial adviser, in the event of a successful rejection of a bid.

The panel dismissed all GUS

BY NIGEL COPE  
Associate City Editor

complaints unanimously. However, it has instructed its executive to consider whether an agreement to pay a success fee should be disclosed in the bid process. As is its usual practice the panel has instructed the executive to prepare a position paper on the issue. GUS said it welcomed the review but declined to say how much it has spent on fighting the case.

Lord Wolfson has previously said he wanted the panel to "show the red card" to the former Argos directors, led by Stuart Rose who is now chief executive of Booker, the troubled cash and carry chain. Lord Wolfson had also threatened to take legal action against the Argos team, including its advisers, and take the matter to the DTI and the House of Lords.

GUS has denied that it was fighting the battle because it believed in retrospect that it overpaid for Argos when it increased its cash offer from £1.6bn to £1.9bn.

## Railtrack awards £200m contract

A JOINT VENTURE between the contractors Balfour Beatty and Tarmac and the French engineer Alstom yesterday won a £200m deal to renew overhead cables on the West Coast Main Line, writes Francesco Guerrera.

The work is part of a £2.2bn modernisation programme by Railtrack to slash journey times on the London-Glasgow route and end the misery of millions of travellers.

The line, which is operated by Richard Branson's Virgin Trains, has got one of the worst punctuality records in the country, with around one in five trains arriving late.

The three companies will replace and strengthen the overhead cables to enable train to travel on the line at up to 140 miles an hour.

The work, which is set to be completed in 2005, will enable passengers to travel between London and Glasgow in just under four hours instead of the five hours and twenty minutes taken by trains at present.

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# SPORT

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Golf: New World Matchplay Championship holds no fears for South African who thrives on head-to-head battles

## Passionate Els targets Tiger

## Nicholas makes a winning recovery

BY ANDY FARRELL

FOR A man who commands presidential attention for doing something as inconsequential in the grand scheme of things as winning a golf tournament, Ernie Els appreciates the simple things in life. After his wedding to his long-time girlfriend, Liesl, on 31 December, the honeymoon was far from the luxurious affair you might expect of a top sporting celebrity.

"We were roughing it," Els said of his trip to the rugged western coast of South Africa. "There was no electricity. We used gas lamps and candles and slept under canvas. Water for the toilet was brought from the sea. We are so spoilt, spending our time in five-star hotels. I didn't shave for days. It was great."

Getting back to nature did Els no harm at all. He won his first tournament of the year, the South African PGA, and was immediately handed a mobile phone. The voice on the other end of the line belonged to President Nelson Mandela. "I just listened," Els said. "What do you say to a great man like that?"

Not much ruffles the 29-year-old from Johannesburg, except perhaps South Africa's defeat by England at Twickenham last December. A few days later he was still smarting. "Don't even mention it," he said before the subject could be raised.

Sport, Liesl excepted, is the love of Els' life. He played rugby and cricket at school and follows his national team's fortunes with a passion. He played tennis for his province and could have turned professional but, at the age of 14, chose golf instead. The decision has brought him riches galore, but finance figures lowly in his priorities. "I follow sport first and the stock market second," he said.

In addition to his homes in Johannesburg, George, on the Cape coast, and Lake Nona in Florida, Els has just bought a house at Wentworth. Part of the attraction was being able to catch the odd Test match or a day at Wimbledon and it will be his base in October during the Rugby World Cup.

Wentworth was also the scene of his three World Match Play titles. There is something about the simplicity of that form of the game that suits the South African and which makes him one of the favourites for the inaugural Andersen Consulting World Matchplay Championship, which starts tomorrow at La Costa in Carlsbad, California.

Apart from Wentworth's annual invitational event, it is high time that there was a proper matchplay event and Els is not alone in being caught up in the anticipation of the world's top 64 players facing each other in 18-hole head-to-head matches.

It helps that, as part of the new World Golf Championship series, there is a total purse of \$2m and a first prize of \$550,000 but, compared to the usual diet of strokeplay tournaments where players get two rounds to make the cut and three to play their way into contention, one factor above all will provide motivation. It is one well known to professional tennis players, but which may come as a shock to the leading golf pros.

"Let's face it, you lose your match, you are out of the tournament," Els said. "So you have to give everything for that particular match. In a strokeplay event, you can play yourself into a position for the week-



South Africa's Ernie Els celebrates one of his many birdies on the way to the PGA Nissan Open title in Los Angeles on Sunday

end to make your move. But with this event you have one match a day and if you lose, you go home; it's goodbye. It is going to be a little bit draining because of that and if you keep winning it will be a long week.

"But it is going to be a special tournament, and it will feel special

*"We were roughing it. There was no electricity. Water for the toilet was brought from the sea. I didn't shave... It was great"*

just to make the field and to be there. To get 64 of the best players in the world right now together, it's exciting just thinking about it. We play so many strokeplay events through the year that I think people have for-

gotten how exciting matchplay can be. Every fan wants to see a bit of a dog fight, a head-to-head fight."

As for the strategy of whether to play the man or the course, Els thinks the secret is knowing when to do which. "I have had a bit of success in matchplay in the past and I must admit when things are going your way and you are playing well, you are just thinking about playing the golf course and trying to make a low number. But when you are one or two down, you start looking at what the other guy is doing. It goes both ways, depending on the situation."

"And you need a bit of luck with the draw because you can draw a brand name like [Tiger] Woods or [Greg] Norman. But there will be a lot of pressure on the favourite players who are not supposed to lose because there will be no easy matches. It will be a tough week but very satisfying, I'm sure, if you win, as

well as being very beneficial to your bank account."

Els perhaps forgets that he is also a brand name that most of the field will be wanting to avoid. What really motivates him is getting back the world No 1 spot he held for a couple of months last year. If Woods thinks he has his paws full with David Duval alone, he should think again. "I can catch Tiger and the others," Els said. "I know I have the talent to do it." Indeed, the South African's American campaign got off to the best possible start on Sunday when he won the Nissan Open at Riviera in Los Angeles ahead of the top two in the world, plus Davis Love and Nick Price for good measure. But, having slipped to seventh in the world, Els is due to play Paul Azinger in the first round at La Costa and will meet Duval in the quarter-finals. A meeting with Woods would have to wait until the 36-hole final on Sunday.

What forced him to relinquish the crown was a back injury. It started as a niggle at the Byron Nelson Classic, worsened at the Volvo PGA and then forced him out of the Buick Classic after nine holes only a week before he was due to defend at the US Open. His stunning early season

*"I think people have forgotten how exciting matchplay can be. Every fan wants to see a dogfight, a head-to-head fight"*

form never returned. "It was very frustrating the second half of last year when I wasn't properly fit. But the back is beautiful now."

The injury was a result of one of the busiest international schedules

of any of the leading players as Els tries to satisfy demands for his appearances at home, in Asia, Europe, where he first came to prominence in 1992, and in America, where he is a double US Open champion. Els knows his way around the inside of an aeroplane, albeit the front end, and will be less fazed than some Americans at the new global era golf is entering with the introduction of three World Championship events.

"I think they are going to be good for golf," Els said. "Golf is a global affair nowadays. You saw it at the Presidents Cup. The Japanese players are really up-and-coming players and heroes in their own country. [Paraguay's] Carlos Franco is probably one of the best known sports stars in his country. Golf has grown and people can watch us on television all round the world so the timing of these tournaments is perfect."

BY GEOFFREY WILSON  
in Kapolei, Hawaii

ALISON NICHOLAS had every reason to expect a rosy future when she made her major breakthrough by winning the US Open in 1997. However, the past 19 months have been anything but kind to the British golfer and it was with a sense of relief that she greeted victory in the LPGA Hawaiian Open here at the weekend.

Despite struggling to a one-over-par 73 in the final round of the 54-hole event, Nicholas held off the challenges of Moira Dunn and Annette DeLuca to record a one-stroke victory. In winning the \$57,000 top prize, Nicholas took home more than she had earned in total since her US Open victory.

"Last year was a tough year," Nicholas said. "I won the US Open in 1997 and I suffered from the pressure beyond that. Last year I was ill and fell off a moped, so this is a great change. I'm delighted to be back in the winner's circle."

"I expected too much, to do well every week. I suppose I became very busy and I didn't have time for myself. I didn't come out until Phoenix [in March] and that's a late start. I got pneumonia on top of that. So I was stop-start all year."

Nicholas started the final round here as co-leader with Michelle McGann. With the weather unpredictable, the Briton's game plan was to hit the middle of the greens and play for pars. Her score was not spectacular, but she finished on a seven-under-par total of 209, which proved good enough.

"I thought par or one over par would be good," she said. "To get that, I had to hit the middle of the greens and two-putt. Because of the weather, I knew it was going to be tough for everyone. I thought someone from the middle of the field would come up."

Nicholas added: "On the fifth tee we were absolutely soaked. It reminded me of home."

By the turn Nicholas had pulled away to a three-stroke lead. A chip to two feet on the 426-yard seventh hole gave her the only birdie on her card. She had bogeys at the 13th and on the closing hole, but the outcome was settled by then.

Dunn, with a final round of 68, and DeLuca, with a 70, had birdies late in the round to go to six under, but it was too little, too late.



Nicholas: One-stroke victory

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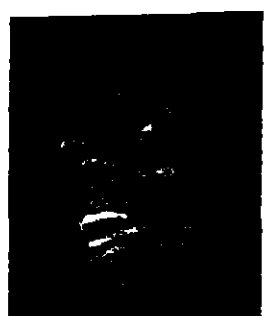
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### TOMORROW



ASHIA HANSEN, Britain's triple jump world indoor record holder, talks to BRIAN VINER about drugs testing, racism, Linford Christie and her rivalry with Denise Lewis

## Baffled by England's superiority complex

EVEN TWENTY years ago, newspapers published in London were not so obsessed with the fortunes of the England rugby team as they are today. Anyone would think the entire honour of the northern hemisphere rested on the shoulders of Lawrence Dallaglio and his chums.

Saturday's unsatisfactory win over Scotland has been discussed virtually wholly in terms of England's prospects in the World Cup. Indeed, one commentator went so far as to say that, before the Scottish match, England had been the "primary contender" for the trophy from the northern hemisphere.

What about France? I never completely trust computer-based rankings because they depend on the criteria that are adopted. Line-out counts, for example, are always questionable because they depend on whether a clear catch is counted as a line-out won, even though the



ALAN WATKINS

ball is subsequently lost to the opposing side for one reason or another. Man is mightier than the machine.

None the less, France appear above England in all the rankings I have seen recently. The most recent has them third, below South Africa and New Zealand, respectively first and second, but above Australia and England at fourth and fifth.

My own ranking, based on results only, has France fourth, behind South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, in that order, but above England. Mind you, I still think New Zealand will win the cup. But there cannot be much argument that the chief threat to the southern hemisphere comes from France. This was so even before last Saturday, and despite their bedraggled and lucky win over Ireland in the Dublin rain two Saturdays before that.

Clive Woodward, the coach, and his players have taken a lot of stick because of the unjustified and vain-glorious assumption that England have some God-given right to appear at least in the semi-finals of this autumn's competition. There is no such right. It is unfair to judge coach and players on that assumption.

True, England were slow to take decisions, or to change decisions that had already been taken. But not even in the mythical days of Geoff Cooke

and Will Carling had England been any different in this respect - or in other respects as well, come to that.

As someone who, more times than he cares to remember, has seen the England pack grind up the middle of the Twickenham pitch to trap the opposition into a penalty 22 metres in front of the posts, Saturday's performance was a feast of what used to be called the handling code, with three tries from each side, only one of which (Tim Rodber's) came from trench warfare.

Nick Beal scored a spectacular try, though I still cannot understand how the Scots allowed him more or less a clear run. Dan Luger showed a lot of class. Richard Hill had his best game for England for roughly a quarter of the match. Above all, Jonny Wilkinson did everything that could have been expected of him and a bit more.

Though I understand perfectly the argument that you cannot sim-

ply tot up points from missed penalties or conversions and alter the score accordingly, it is obvious that if he (or Gavin Hastings, or even the current member of the original squad Craig Chalmers) had been playing for Scotland instead of Kenny Logan, they would have won.

It is odd that Woodward refuses to give Wilkinson an immediate run at outside-half, with Matt Dawson or Kyran Bracken inside him. To play him at inside centre, a position to which he is not really suited, simply delays a change that will have to be made sometime - unless Woodward, in the biggest U-turn since Tony Blair surrendered on all fronts to the countryside lobby, picks Joel Strzansky instead.

I do not underestimate Scotland's spirited performance, John Leslie's generalship or Alan Tait's remarkable strength and speed in a lad of his advanced years. But, unusually, I was sitting in the upper

stand rather than in the press box. From there I could see clearly that in the last quarter the Scots' forwards were unable to follow up kicks. They were ragged and slow. No doubt they were tired out. And who shall blame them?

Both Scotland and Ireland could still mount serious challenges in the World Cup. My native land has more to do. As one fan is supposed to have remarked: "Ah well, it's back to the draining board."

Another privilege of the columnist is that he can imagine six impossible things before breakfast and then write about them. Here I confine myself to one: a Celtic Nations XV to play in the World Cup, with or without the New Zealand exiles, but replacing Scotland, Wales and Ireland as separate nations. I think such an outfit would give the countries from the southern hemisphere a good run for their money. But, as we know, it will never happen.











# Britain's void is Lloyd's worry

WHILE TIM Henman and Greg Rusedski played doubles together in London last night with a view to the Davis Cup tie against the United States in Birmingham at Easter, David Lloyd, the British captain, fretted about where his next international player was coming from.

Lloyd could not contain his frustration that Andrew Richardson, a squad candidate he hoped to see play against world-class opposition, had rejected a wild card for the £510,000 Guardian Direct Cup because he did not consider he merited it.

Richardson's world ranking of No 444 provided compelling evidence in support of his decision, even though it meant turning down the chance to collect £3,200 as a first-round loser. And that is precisely the amount the 24-year-old from Lincolnshire has won so far this year on his journeys to Qatar, Australia, India and Germany, competing chiefly in low grade tournaments.

"It was a total shock to be offered a wild card, and I didn't feel comfortable taking it," Richardson said. "The money would have been nice, but in singles I'm struggling at the moment. I was just being honest. I felt it would be better to give the opportunity to somebody else."

"It was honourable," Lloyd conceded, "but the bit that wor-

## TENNIS

BY JOHN ROBERTS  
at Battersea Park

ried me was that he didn't say, 'I want to show these world class guys'. I was disappointed, but not in a nasty way. I would just like to see him play. If he was in the draw as a wild card, none of these guys would expect an easy ride. They don't like playing somebody like Andrew. He's a very good player. But he doesn't believe he's a good player."

Richardson's wild card went to Sweden's Thomas Enqvist, the world No 13 and Australian Open finalist, who advanced to the second round yesterday with a 6-1, 6-3 win against the Swiss Marc Rosset, the 1992 Olympic champion.

Britain does not have a wild card in the draw. Having offered the chance to Richardson, Jeremy Bates, the manager of men's national training at the Lawn Tennis Association, decided, in consultation with one of the tournament promoters, Jeremy Dier, to take three wild cards for pre-qualifying instead. Martin Lee, Simon Dickson and David Sherwood failed to win a set between them.

Lloyd's concern about the lack of a supporting cast to Henman and Rusedski - "it's a danger zone, the gap is getting wider and wider, it's a worry



The Swiss Marc Rosset worked hard but still lost, 6-1, 6-3 to Sweden's Thomas Enqvist at Battersea Park yesterday

AP

when you have got two superstars and nothing else" - is acute. Both were injured when Britain lost 4-1 to Zimbabwe at Crystal Palace in 1997, the irony being that Richardson produced the performance of the tie in defeating Byron Black, Zimbabwe's No 1.

Moreover, Richardson accepted a wild card for the inaugural Battersea event last year, and the 6ft 7in left-hander nicknamed "Flex" defeated Rosset in the opening round. But

Richardson was so distraught after losing in the first round at Wimbledon last year to the Moroccan Hicham Arazi that he decided to quit the game.

Henman persuaded him to try again, and was his doubles partner in Qatar last month. Henman's coach, David Felgate, also helps Richardson with his game whenever possible.

Yesterday the British No 1 supported Richardson's decision concerning the wild card. "I think it was a good effort,"

Henman said. "He showed a lot of integrity. It's the first time a British player has done a thing like that for a long time."

Henman, the No 2 seed here, is due to play his opening singles match tomorrow night, when a meeting with Jan Krosiak offers an opportunity to erase the memory of one of Britain's darker days. Krosiak won their only previous match in a Davis Cup tie on clay in Slovakia in 1995 as Britain slipped to their lowest point - Group

Two of the Euro-African Zone, effectively the third division.

Rusedski, the No 3 seed, is due on court tonight against Italy's Gianluca Pozzi, ranked No 65, who ended 1998 as the oldest player ranked in the world's top 100 (33 years and 6 months).

The strong winds yesterday threatened to transform the indoor tournament into an outdoor event. Fortunately the tented roof withstood the strain, although one or two players gave it some anxious glances.

"The roof makes strange noises in the wind," said Goran Ivanisevic, the No 7 seed, who advanced to the second round in spite of losing a set 6-0 against the Dutchman Jan Siemerink. "You have to be doubly concentrated, not freak out like I did," added the Croat, who hit 12 double-faults before surviving, 6-3, 0-6, 7-6.

GUARDIAN DIRECT CUP (Battersea Park, London). First round: D. Enqvist (Swe) 6-1, 6-3; M. Rosset (Swi) 6-1, 6-3; G. Ivanisevic (Cro) 6-3, 0-6, 7-6.

## Holliday to ease Swinton plight

### RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

THE SWINTON coach, Les Holliday, is to make a playing comeback at the age of 37, because of his club's injury crisis. The former Great Britain loose forward, who last played - in similar circumstances - over two years ago, is to turn out in the Alliance fixture against Batley tomorrow night and then consider whether to pick himself for Swinton's next first-team match, against Bramley on 7 March.

"I'm going to have a go and see how I feel," said Holliday, who spent most of his career with Widnes and Halifax, as well as representing his country three times. "I've kept myself pretty fit and it could be that I'll be able to help the young lads more out on the pitch than I can from the sidelines."

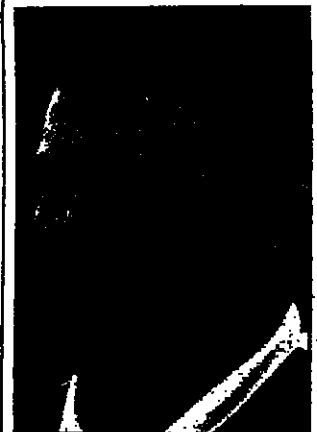
Swinton have six first-team players ruled out with long-term injuries and their results, including a 78-4 thrashing by Huddersfield in the Challenge Cup and a 22-18 defeat in the Northern Ford Premiership at Doncaster, last season's bottom club, on Sunday, have reflected the strain on their resources.

"Garry Schofield was an inspiration to me with the way he played for Doncaster against us," Holliday said. "He played with his head and never got his shorts dirty. If he can still do it, perhaps I can."

Holliday's willingness to get the boots out of the attic underlines his determination to continue at Swinton, despite their dismal start to the season. "If I threw the towel in, it would show a complete lack of leadership qualities," he said.

He also has the backing of the club's chief executive, Tony Barrow. "We aren't going to panic after losing a couple of games," he said. "That would be stupid."

Super League has brought in some extra income with the sale of television rights for the next two seasons to Fox Sports



Holliday: Back in boots

in Australia. Matches will be shown throughout Australia every week during the season. Coming on top of a deal to screen matches in Francophone Europe and North Africa via the AB Sports channel in Paris, the deal shows the potential for extra income and exposure now that the competition controls its own rights.

Announcements of contracts covering other areas of the world are expected before the launch of the fourth season of Super League on 5 March, and a deal for a magazine-style programme to be shown on the BBC is also nearing fruition.

Michael Smith, the New Zealander sacked by Hull after allegedly drinking in a night club until the early hours before playing in their Challenge Cup tie at Castleford, is appealing against the club's decision.

Smith, who claims not to have had a drink all night, has called in the Rugby League Players' Association to represent him. His alleged misdeeds pale into insignificance alongside events in Australia, where North Sydney have fined four players a total of almost £30,000 after a brawl in a nightclub. And Julian O'Neill, already kicked out by a series of clubs including the London Broncos, faces a similar fate at South Sydney after incidents that followed a pre-season game in Dubai.

The stories have damaged the image of the game in Australia at a time when it is hoping for a world record crowd for the double-header that will open Sydney's Olympic Stadium in two weeks' time. Gateshead's latest Australian recruits, Brett Grogan and Danny Lee, get their chance to stake a claim for a Super League starting place when the new club plays its second and last friendly, at Hunslet tomorrow.

## Penney pleased by small change

Zimbabwe's player-coach scents success in this year's World Cup in England. By Iain Fletcher in Harare

I WOULDN'T be surprised if Zimbabwe do well in the World Cup," said Trevor Penney during the recent second Test match against the England A touring side. Being the player-coach of the Zimbabwean A team and a vital member of Warwickshire in the last few seasons, he is well placed to judge.

"Definitely, I think we could cause an upset or shock some countries who tend to think of us as easy pickings," he said.

"We've had two talented players return to Zimbabwe and this has made a huge difference to the quality of the side," said Penney, who was himself born in Zimbabwe. With three years left on a contract in England and a lucrative benefit in the offing, the 30-year-old Penney is, however, not likely to follow the example of Neil Johnson or Murray Goodwin and return to Zimbabwe.

"Murray was struggling to get a game in a strong Western Australian side so he decided to come back to Zimbabwe and Johnson has played in England for Leicestershire as well as in South Africa for Natal for a few seasons. He was also born in Zimbabwe so we're not poaching players but having our own natural talent return," Penney said.

"We only got Test status in 1992 so for the first few years

we were bound to struggle, but I can see that the standard is improving and having players return is a great boost."

England certainly struggled in Zimbabwe two winters ago in the infamous "we flippin' murdered em" series but, watching the recent first Test between the A teams in Harare, it was difficult not to think that England looked the superior side.

Nine of the Zimbabwean side had played Test cricket but, with only eight clubs in the country and about 100 cricketers, it is unrealistic to expect them to have the strength in depth that county cricket affords the English. It is not the depth that counts as much as the top 13 or 14 and Zimbabwe are no longer weak. The Flower brothers, Grant and Andy, are excellent cricketers and Heath Streak spearheads the bowling attack with aggression and pace - but Penney realises there is a cutting edge missing.

"We struggle with everything to do with the quickies," he explained. "We have pretty slow and flat wickets in Zimbabwe so we're not developing the out and out quicks, or get used to facing them. We tend to produce medium-pace line and length bowlers, but that is another reason why I think we could do well in the World Cup.

A damp May in England could suit us. Sometimes playing for Warwickshire I spend most of the first month playing and missing at four balls in six."

Penney believes that much of the improvement in Zimbabwean cricket has come since their southern neighbour, South Africa, invited them to enter a side into the Currie Bowl competition. It is in this cricket that Penney plays for Zimbabwe A as an overseas player.

"Playing against the South African provincial second teams has helped us greatly," he said. "It exposes us to lots of different players and has made our batsmen learn to face fast and aggressive bowling. Last year we came second, which proved that we were getting tougher in our attitudes and this year we are joint top with Eastern Province, who we go to play after this England tour. Without the South African help I admit we would struggle to develop as quickly as we have, because I think Zimbabwean cricket is as strong now as it has ever been."

And what about English cricket, with all the structural changes this coming season?

"I know it's been said before but we play too much cricket in England," Penney said. "There is no intensity about practice because players do the same



Penney: I can see that the standard is improving, and having players return is a great boost

Allsport

thing every day for six months and they have to look after their bodies and nurse niggly injuries. I just feel that often there is a lack of fun when reality should be remembering that we play cricket for enjoyment, for fun - that is why we played as kids.

"The idea of two divisions is good but a transfer market worries me. If the authorities want to improve the standard then they should reduce the number of overs in a day. So often the last session is played in a rush to get the 104 overs bowled. Cut it back to 90 overs a day just like

Test matches, allow players time to think and watch the quality improve as each over assumes greater importance. Pitches need to improve as well but the trick is to make every ball bowled as competitive as possible. It doesn't matter how and I can't confess to knowing the answers, so it will take experimentation, but good Test cricketers will only come from a healthy environment."

England were warned two winters ago of Zimbabwe's skill in the shortened game. May will tell how they have developed since then.

## Meissnitzer closes on title

ALEXANDRA MEISSNITZER, maintaining her winning form from the recent World Ski Championships, beat her fellow Austrian Anita Wachter by 65 hundredths of a second in Are, Sweden, last night to virtually clinch the World Cup giant slalom title.

Competing under the lights on the world's only illuminated GS course, "Meissi" had a combined time of 2 minutes 12.97 seconds after two near-perfect runs down the Gastrappet. It was the ninth victory of the season and fourth in the series for Meissnitzer and it also extended her lead in the overall standings.

In the giant slalom standings, she now leads Wachter by 620 points to 436 and only needs a pair of top 30 finishes in the last two races to clinch the title. Meissnitzer, who led after the first run, also has a chance to win the seasonal downhill and super-G titles.

Wachter, racing on one of her favourite hills where she

### SKIING

clinched the 1994 World Cup title, finished second in 2:13.62. Andrine Flemmen of Norway, the silver medalist ahead of Wachter in the World Championships at Vail, Colorado, was third in 2:14.80 with Sonja Nef of Switzerland fourth in 2:14.88, followed by Anna Ottosson of Sweden and the former double Olympic and world champion Deborah Compagnoni of Italy. Martina Ertl, last year's winner here and the World Cup GS champion, missed a gate in the first run and was disqualified.

Yesterday's race marked the restart of the women's World Cup circuit after the World Championships and was the first of four in Scandinavia's leading ski resort this week. A night slalom is scheduled for Tuesday, another GS will be held under the lights on Wednesday before the first-ever women's sprint downhill on the Bernhard Russi-designed Olympia course on Saturday.

## Dott demolition heartens Hendry

STEPHEN HENDRY rediscovered his golden touch in Aberdeen last night to win Scottish Open title with a 9-1 defeat of his compatriot and first-time finalist, Graeme Dott. And while his first win in Britain for two years was a great relief to the 30-year-old world No 2, Hendry's objective is a record seventh world title at the Crucible.

"There are plenty of tournaments before we get to Sheffield but it's great to be going there with a win under my belt," he said. "All my rivals have been winning - John Higgins, Mark Williams and Ronnie O'Sullivan - so this is a great confidence boost. It's almost like winning your first tournament again, it feels that long since I won one."

"There's been a huge improvement in my form in the last couple of months and the extra confidence that winning a title brings will do me no harm. But you've also got to put in the work. Talent is not enough these days and that's why I've still been putting in the

### SNOOKER

hours on the practice table." Dott, a Glaswegian, was no match for Hendry. He could have won at least half of the eight first-session frames but lacked the big-match experience to put one of the game's top players under pressure. "I knew if I could get a good start Graeme might find it hard going," Hendry said. "He didn't play as well as he has been doing all week but he has shown he has got the bottle to compete at the top."

"He probably didn't deserve to be 8-0 down but even then I had to be professional and get the job done. You've still got to get over the line and I didn't want to ruin all the good work."

Hendry's pay cheque of £80,000 takes his career earnings to £5.9m and his seasonal prize money to £185,000. Dott collects £32,000 and can take great heart into his final two tournaments, the British Open at Plymouth in April and before that the World Championship qualifiers at Telford next month.

## Crisis of identity

SOUTH AFRICA'S batsmen were put in double jeopardy yesterday when they found identical twins fielding side by side for much of the opening day of their three-day tour match against Northern Districts in Hamilton, New Zealand.

The presence of James and Hamish Marshall, who are virtually impossible to tell apart, confused players, spectators and even the scorers. In addition, there were two other pairs of brothers in the side. Herschelle Gibbs was the first man to involve the 30-year-old twins when his innings ended at 57 with a drive to mid-on. Scorers, commentators and spectators had to wait until lunch to dis-

cover that James had taken the catch. When the Northern Districts captain, Robbie Hart, brought on one of the Marshalls to bowl, officials and spectators had to wait until tea to discover the bowler was James.

The dilemma provided the only fun for the home side as the tourists rattled up 407 for 4 declared and, with the joke wearing thin, the arrival of the twins' father, Drew, in the scorers' room seemed to have solved the problem, but no. The embarrassed Mr Marshall had to admit: "They normally wear something different, which helps, but I have no idea which is which from here... their Mum might know."

## Ban threat to Eden Gardens

CALCUTTA'S EDEN Gardens, one of the largest cricket grounds in the world, faces an uncertain future after an unruly crowd forced India and Pakistan to complete the Asian Test Championship in front of empty stands on Saturday.

Police and media outnumbered spectators as Pakistan beat India by 46 runs on the fifth and final day. Trouble on the last two days fuelled speculation that Eden Gardens could be banned from Test cricket for some time.

"Calcutta may lose Test-centre status for two years," the Indian newspaper the Statesman said on Sunday. "Save cricket, ban Calcutta. The city is unfit for

the game," the newspaper declared in an editorial comment.

Spectators disrupted play for 46 minutes on Friday when they threw water bottles and oranges at Pakistani fielders after Sachin Tendulkar was unlucky to be run out as he collided with a fielder. On Saturday, spectators armed with stones and bricks disrupted play for almost three hours when India were on the verge of defeat after Pakistan took three quick wickets. Play resumed only after police evicted the vast majority of the 90,000-strong crowd.

Eden Gardens also fell into ignominy in 1996 when spectators threw missiles as Sri Lanka were on the verge of victory in a World Cup semi-final. The match was abandoned and then conceded by India. Pakistan's captain, Wasim Akram, is reported to want a two-year ban on international cricket at the venue. "He [Wasim] felt that a two-year ban on holding international matches at the venue would be in order to teach trouble-makers a lesson," the Statesman said. Officials of the Cricket Association of Bengal said they were disappointed by the crowd's behaviour. "We are very shocked. Before holding any match, we should think carefully now," said a spokesman.

By HIMANGSHU WAITS

There are plenty of tournaments before we get to Sheffield but it's great to be going there with a win under my belt," he said. "All my rivals have been winning - John Higgins, Mark Williams and Ronnie O'Sullivan - so this is a great confidence boost. It's almost like winning your first tournament again, it feels that long since I won one."

There's been a huge improvement in my form in the last couple of months and the extra confidence that winning a title brings will do me no harm. But you've also got to put in the work. Talent is not enough these days and that's why I've still been putting in the









# SPORT

GUSCOTT KEEPS ON RUNNING P25 • ELS, A MATCH FOR ANYONE P23

## Fifa go-ahead for Arsenal rematch

THE CONCEPT of fair play received a shot in the arm last night when Fifa decided to allow the rematch of the FA Cup fifth-round tie between Arsenal and Sheffield United to go ahead tonight. "We are obviously pleased that our original decision was seen to be the correct one," a Football Association spokesman said.

Arsenal prevailed 2-1 in the first encounter on 13 February, but in a manner that led the club to offer immediately to restage the game. United had kicked the ball out of bounds so their player, Lee Morris, could receive treatment for an injury. But Arsenal's Marc Overmars scored

FOOTBALL  
BY STEVEN BAKER

from a pass by Nwankwo Kanu following a throw-in that their team-mate, Ray Parlour, had directed towards the Blades' goalkeeper, Alan Kelly.

The FA was quick to sanction Arsenal's offer, and Fifa's president Sepp Blatter was full of praise for the gesture. On reflection, however, Fifa decided it had to discuss the issue, especially as no actual infringement of the laws had taken place, merely a contravention of the spirit of the law.

Arsenal's Tony Adams said

he would have felt terrible if Fifa had banned the replay. The England defender was rested for the original tie, but said: "There's no way I could have lifted the trophy in May having not replayed this game. We want it to be played. We think it's fair that we start again even-stevens in the fifth round of the FA Cup."

Arsenal have sold 38,000 tickets at half price for the rematch, and Adams is delighted to play it again.

"It is the sensible and honest thing to do," he said. "A mistake has been made and the lads involved have thrown their hands up. I'm honest and I know the

manager is honest and there's no way we could have gone through to the next round without having offered a replay."

"Personally, I was astonished that the game finished. I thought it would have been stopped before the end. I couldn't believe it when somebody told me we had played the last 15 minutes."

"A lot of possible scenarios have come to light since, but the referee played it the way he saw it. I think Steve Bould, who was the captain, suggested a few things but the ref said there was nothing he could do because no laws had been broken."

Arsenal's manager, Arsene

Wenger, said it had not been easy to focus on the game.

"It has made things difficult," he said. "Yesterday, for the whole day, the game was on and off and the phone kept going. It was less difficult for the players because they didn't know. They just came in and said 'do we play or not?' Twenty-four hours before a game this is not the best way."

Arsenal, still glowing from their 5-0 demolition of Leicester City on Saturday, are without Martin Keown, Emmanuel Petit, Matthew Upson and Luis Boa Morte.

Wenger's Sheffield United counterpart Steve Bruce, who was incensed straight after the

game and only placated by Arsenal's offer, also believed Fifa was wrong to leave it so late.

Bruce had asked: "It's quite farcical because, if they had something to say, why didn't they say it a week ago? Thousands of our fans have bought tickets and paid to go down there, so it appears strange for it to happen a week later. It seems a bit late in the day to change the decision."

Bruce looks set to keep faith with the same side which started the original game and drew with promotion-chasing Bradford City on Friday.

"We've prepared normally because, as far as we've been

concerned, the game has always been on," he said. "The players have been focusing on a big game again and they want to play again. It's been a pretty hectic couple of weeks but from the outset, I've said I hoped common sense would prevail."

"Most of us in football aren't really interested in politics. All our lads want to do is get on with the game and play football again. The sad thing about the whole episode is we were only 12 or 13 minutes away from a proper replay back at our ground."

"It's difficult enough to go to Highbury once but it's even more difficult twice. We know it's a difficult task but we'll give it

our best shot again. I thought our tactics were spot-on last time we were down there."

"We know we have to be at our maximum and catch them on an off-day but I thought we played extremely well in the first game, especially in the second half. I thought we caused them a few problems and got a foothold in the game."

Bruce has added the reserve goalkeeper Simon Tracey, Michael Twiss and Nicky Marker to the 14 on duty against Bradford, while around 4,000 United fans have bought tickets at £8 each - half the price charged for the original tie.

More football, page 28

## Honda make rivals see red over white car

THE WORLD of Formula One likes nothing more than a bit of intrigue to spice up the long months of the close season, and the latest imbroglio concerns a plain white car that could be seen circulating at Silverstone yesterday, in between the bright sunshine, gale-force winds, gusts of hail and occasional snowflakes. The problem with the new Honda grand prix car, according to its rivals, is that it goes too fast - even though its first appearance in an actual race is still 12 months away.

Honda's initial entry into F1 came in 1964, also with a plain white car. Four years later, with only two wins to their name, they withdrew. But in 1983 they returned as engine suppliers to the Williams and McLaren teams, with whom they won several world championships. In 1991 a recession threatened Japanese industry and prompted a second withdrawal. But now the commercial climate is judged appropriate for a full-scale return.

Their strategy is to spend an entire year testing their prototype, under the direction of Harvey Postlethwaite, the English designer formerly associated with Hekeith, Tyrrell and

MOTOR RACING  
BY RICHARD WILLIAMS  
at Silverstone

Ferrari, before making a competitive debut. Driven by Jos Verstappen, the talented young Dutchman, the car shocked its putative competitors by posting the fastest times throughout a three-day open test session at Jerez in late January. Suspecting that the Honda was being run beneath the permitted minimum weight limit, or otherwise infringing regulations, other teams demanded a rule to prevent such demoralising - and, more importantly, publicity-hogging - behaviour. Postlethwaite refused to comment on those accusations yesterday. "We're just getting on with doing what we want to do," he said.

Of this season's contenders, only Benetton ran their cars yesterday. The remainder of the British-based teams - McLaren, Williams, Jordan, Arrows, Stewart and the new BAR outfit - are expected today and tomorrow for final tests before crating up their brand-new cars and shipping them to Melbourne for the first race of the season, the Australian Grand Prix, a week on Sunday.



White lightning: Honda's controversial new grand prix car returns to the pits at Silverstone yesterday after another rapid testing session

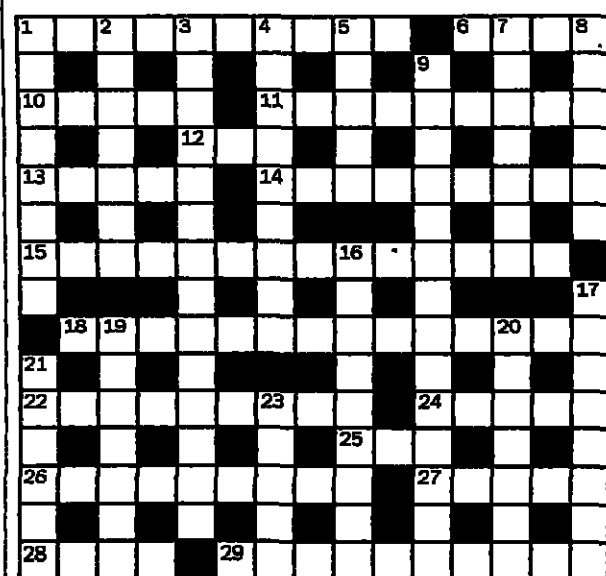
David Ashdown

### THE TUESDAY CROSSWORD

No.3853 Tuesday 23 February

by Aelred

Monday's Solution



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SIGNA LANA  
TORDER BLASTER

- ACROSS
- Perhaps rate this a sad film? (4-6)
  - Civil Engineer found among like experts (4)
  - Don't bother to try? (5)
  - Charge for carrying beer to mature (9)
  - Want not to see daughter born (3)
  - Vigorously brush object in one's garden (5)
  - Women successful, we hear, in getting a personal servant (5-4)
  - You gave weapon to lawless type that'll take your money? (3-5,6)
  - Re Balmoral time: possibly it helped Victoria to remember (6,8)
  - House insect eats a burn offering (9)

- Ant in Moslem metropolis (5)
- Crude about hostility (3)
- It determines degree of drive to have dress in proportion? (4,5)
- Exercise sense giving swimming aid back to fellow (5)
- Toy you twice found non-U (2-2)
- Wise friend keeps impolite nit in order (10)

- DOWN
- Lecture's how to provide some TV? (4,4)
  - Isn't bird seen in national place? (7)
  - Malt spirits could get Carolyn her job with navy (4,10)
  - Show sorrow about old

- measure that's disgusting (9)
- Went wrong, upending car in river (5)
- Something to eat for man at one (7)
- Feature of car used by drug ring (6)
- Call for a lad to repeat? (6-2,6)
- Goose over trees in Essex place (9)
- Generous meal could be as much as you can manage? (8)
- Learner upset a bully but this could be calming (7)
- One's post is directed to one sect member (7)
- Being coy about awful gag is hairy (6)
- Extreme, so to speak (5)

## Tyson in isolation after TV tantrum

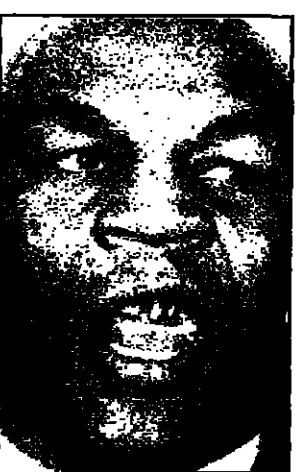
IF MIKE TYSON is trying to show that he is repentant, re-born and ready to return to the ring, he is going about it in a strange way. Already in jail for assaulting two motorists, the former heavyweight champion is now in isolation after a temper tantrum.

When Tyson was sent to prison earlier this month, he and his lawyers kept quiet in the hope that he could avoid being disqualified from the ring again. He had only recently recovered his licence, which was taken away after he bit off part of Evander Holyfield's ear. Then he attacked two motorists near Washington after a minor traffic incident, and was given a year in prison. He was still on probation for raping a beauty pageant contestant in Indiana, having served only part of the sentence. The strategy seemed to be to keep a low profile and hope it all blew over.

But on Saturday, Tyson apparently threw a television at the bars of his Maryland prison and was sent to the administrative segregation unit. "Mr Tyson was going through some problems Friday night," said Eric Seleznow, spokesman for Montgomery Department of Correction and Rehabilitation. "He threw a TV," he said. "He threw it against some bars with people on the other side. No one was hurt."

One possible explanation for

BOXING  
BY ANDREW MARSHALL  
in Washington



Tyson: Denied medication

the boxer's renewed bout with the authorities, sources in the Tyson camp told new agencies on Sunday, was that he had recently stopped taking his anti-depressants. The medication was stopped by prison doctors after Tyson refused to let a prison psychologist examine him, according to AE.

The incident came after a guard hung up the telephone while Tyson was trying to use it. A disciplinary hearing was being held yesterday, with Tyson possibly liable to more jail time. But since he had been

well behaved since he entered prison, that seemed unlikely. "He's been generally compliant and reasonable until this incident," Mr Seleznow said.

The question mark hanging over Tyson's career gets larger every day. One query is whether Indiana calls him back to serve out the rest of his rape sentence, if it deems the conditions of his parole violated. One reason why Tyson's lawyers did not immediately appeal the jailing was that if he did his time, then Indiana would leave things be. The authorities did not revoke the terms of his parole after the Holyfield incident: Tyson was said to have done well beforehand, to have done more than the required community service, and to have attended counselling sessions for sex offenders.

However, there is another set of questions, over the attitude of the Nevada Athletic Commission. They took his licence away in 1997 and gave it back last October, but it must be in jeopardy again. In particular, Tyson's handlers had told the NAC that he was often depressed, but that this could be controlled through the use of drugs. He was taken off the drugs a week before his fight in January with Francois Botha. The latest incident poses big questions about whether Tyson is safe without medication.

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# TUESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

## Sarah Kane was a writer of shocking and angry talent. At the age of 27, she took her own life. Did her plays foreshadow her death?

BY PAUL TAYLOR



g to run another table as it is unwell money as it can National Lottery. it is no reason for grant Camelot's ie plethora of existe exploited. days and Saturdays "numbers" games the football pools. y Premium Bonds anything from the e. to whoever is to ster. Maybe. just me too far.

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The media called her "the Bad Girl of British Drama", but my abiding memory of Sarah Kane, who at the age of 27 took her own life last Friday, is of a young woman delightfully doubled up in helpless, choking, gut-wrenching laughter as a group of us stood around cracking silly-foreigner jokes on alien soil. It was in Copenhagen last November. A British delegation of dramatists, directors, theatre professionals (and this critic) had descended on the city for a weekend conference about the creation and nurturing of a new writing culture. The young woman who shot to notoriety and front-page prominence at the age of 23 with her Royal Court play *Blasted*, bided her time and stole the show at this event.

Playing up to an audience of eager, yet slightly chippy Danes, the Brit contingent had perhaps overstated the positiveness of the relationship between dramatist and theatrical establishment in this country. Here was the cue for Kane, in the evening session, to cut the self-congratulatory cant and launch a devastating account of the innumerable ways in which a writer's vision is often, and for institutionalised reasons, betrayed in this world mecca of theatre. The Danes lapped her up.

Afterwards, with everyone a bit hysterical from a gruelling 14-hour day, we drank too much and started poking fun at the (to our ears) supreme absurdities of the Danish tongue where, say, the word for "bookshop" is "boghandel". My first thought that night was: how can one square the spectacle of this slight, fresh-faced blonde woman, creaking herself in schoolgirlish laughter, with the dark extremities of the dramatist's imagination that has put on stage every atrocity from the eating of dead babies to forcible sex-changes in totalitarian prisons; from violent male rape to castration and a mutilated penis sizzling on a barbecue? My second thought was: no, somewhat frighteningly, this adds up. The life-loving elation was the flip side of the depression that did, indeed, eventually push her to the brink and beyond.

So, it's the laughter I remember: but in her short professional life, it has to be said there was not a great deal for her to laugh about. *Blasted*, the play in which Bosnia suddenly erupted into a Leeds hotel room (brilliantly staged by James Macdonald at the Theatre Upstairs in January

1995), can be seen as both the making and the unmaking of her. Not many 23-year-old dramatists wake up to find their latest work the subject of heated discussions on *Newsnight*, or dismissed as "a disgusting piece of filth" by the *Daily Mail*, or hailed as the most auspicious Royal Court play since Edward Bond's *Shelter* masterpiece *Saved* with its metaphor of the baby-stoning. What had been put round Kane's neck was simultaneously a garland and a millstone.

After a suicide, it is only human to grope for something – or preferably someone – to blame. It is a temptation that should be resisted. In the following days, there will, doubtless, be cheap journalistic exercises in breast-beating hindsight, alongside the suggestion that, given her mental fragility and the media feeding-frenzy that tended to accompany her every play, the suicide was a tragic accident waiting to happen. The truth is more complicated and humdrum. It's certainly the case that very few journalists come out well from the *Blasted* brouhaha – not least this critic. Not only were the reviews almost unanimously hostile, but the play provoked an astonishing level of moral outrage which spread to the news pages of papers that normally regarded theatre as entirely superfluous.

I was present, straight after the first-night performance when two of my colleagues on other papers led the charge by deciding to cook up this play as a news item. My informed guess is that: a) neither of them had been profoundly offended by the play; and b), their subsequent

behaviour was not motivated by malice, but by an almost childish sense of journalistic fun – the thought that it would be a wheeze to drag the theatre out of the ghetto of the theatre pages and into mainstream public attention.

Of course, in all the resulting fog of whipped-up synthetic indignation, the play – which both exhibits precocious talent and is obscurely flawed – never received the kind of sustained analysis it deserves. It is a drama in which the central character (like Kane's own father) is a tabloid journalist and, among many other things, *Blasted* is an indictment of the priorities of tabloid journalism. Ironically, the reception of this work endorsed her cultural diagnosis. Thought was abandoned: instead, the press gave Kane the "Bad Girl" label and left her with the impossible dilemma of living up to it – and living it down.

It's perhaps no accident that, just as her friend Mark Ravenhill followed up *Shopping and Fucking* with a contemporary reworking of the Faust legend, Kane moved after *Blasted* into the relatively less exposed area of classical updates. But *Phaedra's Love* is, I sense, a very personal work. The ache to find something redemptive and tender in a godless, loveless universe (crucially, Kane was a lapsed born-again Christian), here becomes more insistent. The play's most piercing stroke is Kane's radical solution to the tricky problem of finding a modern-day counterpart for the proud young prince, Hippolytus, who spurned his stepmother's smutty overtures with a priggish, militant chastity.

In her version, he becomes a grumpy, reclusive, Nineties slob whose denial of love is expressed not as celibacy but as the indiscriminate indulgence of someone who treats sex as junk food and crap TV. He idly allows Phaedra to give him a blow-job, which cruelly highlights the fact that while it's easy to get in to this guy's knickers, it's impossible to get in to his heart.

Kane's last two works pushed two divergent extremes: visual and verbal. *Cleansed*, again beautifully mounted by Macdonald last spring on the main stage of the Court, was like a cross between a play and an installation piece as it evoked an unremittingly harrowing institution designed to rid society of its undesirables. For the first time here, in my estimation, the yearning for some loving, purifying alternative to the horror, symbolised in the incestuous devotion between a brother and sister, made a deeper dramatic impact in a Kane play than the atrocities.

A drama for four lost voices, *Cruze* moved to the opposite pole, some critics likening it to radio drama, notwithstanding director Vicky Featherstone's superb staging concept, in which the characters sat on a line of swivel chairs like the guests on some metaphysically confessional TV show. The piece is Jerry Springer meets TS Eliot, quotations from whose poetry run through the verbal exchanges. In my review, I wrote: "On a number of occasions, *Cruze* echoes *The Waste Land*: Give, sympathise, control." Eliot's poem, written during a nervous breakdown, gestures towards regeneration myths with which it cannot make a living connection. At a further desolate remove, Kane's play beseechingly gestures towards the impotent gestures of the poem. That is the measure of its despair. Watching it, it crossed my mind that perhaps, as with Eliot, a reconversion experience to Christianity was on the cards.

I suspect, though, that on these deep issues she was incapable of the consolations of self-deception. Sarah Kane was a moralist of sometimes rebarbative rigour and mordant wit. A terrible pity that her career, which began with a storm of publicity, looks set to end in the same way. We all, press and theatre included, need to take far greater care of young talent and to remember that, as Ezra Pound put it, art is news that stays news. But, if the ending is grievously premature it also, like her writing, demonstrates an unselfish logic and, yes, considerable strength of character.

Obituary, page 6



Love under the threat of institutionalised violence in 'Cleansed' Ivan Kyncl

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## Baby 'experiments'

Sir: I am horrified at the way in which the work of Dr David Southall has been dismissed in the media ("Investigation ordered after 28 babies die in hospital experiment", 18 February).

Headlines concentrating on 28 babies who have died out of 123 treated by the negative pressure tank (iron lung) method could have read, just as meaningfully, as "94 babies saved from certain death". A similar number died from conventional treatment in the control group. Babies born very prematurely live their first few weeks on the margin, under constant threat from infection or other complications.

If we pursue witch-hunts instead of knowledge we will all suffer, as my son did for the first six months of his life at the hands of "conventional treatment", until Dr Southall put him in a negative pressure tank and gave him a whole night's rest and sleep for the first time and so gave him the rest of his life.

Having gone through the pain of seeing my baby "intubated" and "oxygenated" with lungs controlled by machines, I ask just how much more barbaric can conventional treatment be. The feet and hands are cut several times a day for tests and lines inserted into limbs and the head, along with a range of other excruciating procedures.

No wonder parents of premature children are terrified and bemused by consultants. At the time of Dr Southall's trials, proponents of conventional techniques generally refused even to give painkillers to the babies. The line given to parents was that premature babies did not feel pain. No wonder Dr Southall came across so differently to parents, as he spent his life searching and testing alternatives that might cause the parent and child so much less grief.

Doctors who strive for improvements to relieve pain and suffering should not be pilloried. Experimentation is the only way we will learn for future generations.

TONY PIERCE  
Mereworth, Kent

Sir: The question of informed consent is always difficult for emergency situations. If we banned all randomised controlled trials including sick babies we will condemn future children to no prospect of better medical care. What is the best method of obtaining informed consent from distraught parents two to four hours after the birth of their poorly baby?

The authors of the scientific paper on the North Staffordshire trial (*Pediatrics* 1996; vol 98:pp 1154-1160) report that 36 parents chose not to allow their babies in the trial and also report that two sets of parents withdrew their children from the study after initially giving consent. These facts are reassuring.

Medical ethical standards are changing and I am sure paediatricians are better at getting consent now compared with 10 years ago. Patient (and parent) information leaflets are now inspected by ethics committees and we have all learnt to write in simple, uncomplicated language.

DR RICHARD I LINDLEY  
Consultant Geriatrician and Senior Lecturer  
Western General Hospital  
Edinburgh

## Oafs rebuked

Sir: Seldom have I seen a more pusillanimous leader than yours of 19 February, in which you deplore Jack Straw's call to us not to "walk on by".

Situations which involve violence should be handled with care, but lesser incidents we can all confront. Despite my age (79), or perhaps because of it, I recently rebuked three young men for smoking in a railway carriage. They mocked and jeered, but then I started going round the carriage, canvassing support. I had got no further than the first fellow-passenger when the smokers backed down and

extinguished their cigarettes.

This kind of oafish behaviour is not a "public display of high spirits": the least we can do is support each other in combating rudeness, rowdiness and vandalism, as and when they start. Jack Straw is right.

DR C D V WILSON  
West Kirby, Merseyside

Sir: Jack Straw's call for a more community-led approach to fighting crime is a welcome change from the right-wing pronouncements he made recently about the alleged effectiveness of prison.

However, whereas everyone has a duty to do what they can should they come across a violent crime being committed against an innocent party, such as a mugging, I do not think it is wise to recommend that people should place their lives at risk for the sake of property. A few smashed windows on a phone box are utterly irrelevant in comparison with the value of human life. Far better to advise people merely to report the incident to the police.

Sociologists have rightly told us that crime is a result of poverty and poor education and socialisation. However, crime is also a result of a wider cultural ethos which has, for at least the past twenty years, encouraged competition, social atomisation and greed. This is the paradox at the heart of the Blair administration - a call for community spirit, but acceptance of an economic system based on individualism. I fear Mr Straw's comments will fall on largely deaf ears.

MARKS LANG  
Port Talbot, South Wales

## No royal wimp

Sir: Kirsty McLeod's article on royal parenting (*Historical Notes*, 15 February) is not the good advertisement for her book *Battle Royal* that she obviously hopes.

Apart from the politically incorrect mocking of an individual royal parent (Historical Notes, 15 February) is not the good advertisement for her book *Battle Royal* that she obviously hopes. Apart from the politically incorrect mocking of an individual

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



Carnival in Venice No 2: Revellers gather at the Artists' Ball

Andrew Buurman

with knock-knees how does one's

"upbringing" produce this physical defect? My own son suffered from it, not I hope because if the way we brought him up. However he managed to survive thirty years in the infantry, including a spell in the Parachute Regiment.

Nor can George VI have been all that of an invalid if he managed to survive Dartmouth pre-1914 and active service at sea in 1914-18, including Jutland. He also coped with the then dangerous activity of learning to fly as an RAF pilot and was a keen rider to hounds. Wing Commander TOM HUDSON Buckingham

## Thames abused

Sir: Lord Attenborough and others (letter, 22 February) are right to highlight the planning nonsense that is affecting the Thames in Richmond. Sadly, the problems of out-of-scale, inappropriate development on the banks of the Thames are not confined to Richmond and Twickenham, but are affecting the Thames and its banks along its entire London stretch.

Much of the development is for so-called "luxury housing" which does little to deal with local housing needs, often adds to local transport chaos by demanding unnecessary parking spaces and denies rights of access to the river

which, in turn, restricts recreational and educational opportunities for millions. In some parts development turns the river banks into concrete canyons, which denude the banks' natural quality and ability to deal with flooding. Proposals at Wapping and at Fulham football ground go as far as to build into the river - a true indication of the inefficient use of land in London.

Old Father Thames is literally being sold down the river. Significantly, in its proposals for the Greater London Authority, the Government mentions the Thames once, and then only in terms of transporting waste or tourists.

PAUL de ZYLVA  
Friends of the Earth London  
London N1

## GM testing time

Sir: Thank you to Anne McElvoy for her insight-rich article "The Government must listen to our fears about GM food" (17 February). I have many reservations about GM foods, and these are certainly not due to my "peasant suspicion of technology". I have a degree in biology and considerable laboratory experience and have read textbooks on GM techniques and scientific papers on the subject, every one of which has set loud

alarm bells ringing in my ears.

What we need is considerably more than "to tighten testing and licensing procedures along the same lines as those applied to new drugs on the market". Drugs are easy to test. They are specific, pure chemicals whose dosage can be precisely controlled. Foods are infinitely complex. Possible harmful nutritional effects from eating genetically distorted plants may only be evident in the long term or even in our children or grandchildren. It will, realistically, take 50 years to fully test them for safety.

We don't need them and would do well to divert our precious resources and creativity to developing the many and diverse safe foods we already have.

JOANNA CLARKE  
Glasgow

Sir: Discussions about the safety of cloning and of GM food always sound like two blind people arguing whether it is safe to cross the road. One of them is saying, "There is no evidence that there is any traffic, and there is a big reward on the other side". The other replies, "There may be traffic coming, and the only way to know is to step out and see if we get hit - I'm staying here". The first responds, "I'm prepared to take the risk, and if I go, we both go."

GM food safety is not just about

whether rats feel a bit under the weather - it is about terminator seeds empowering commercial interests (even against governments), about unforeseeable and irreversible ecological consequences. It is also about removing man's need to understand nature and inserting an utter dependence on products and patents.

So I would say this to the impartial scientist: "For God's sake, have a point of view. This could be the very death of impartial scientific research."

To the confused politician: "Commercial genetic engineering could be the greatest threat to the nation state since the atom bomb. You'd better be prepared to fight that corner if you want my vote."

KUNO van der POST  
Oxford

## French lead the way

Sir: Your report on the reduced working hours in France ("Kafkaesque world of a French social experiment", 22 February) is fine on economics and business but omits mention of perhaps the most important impact of all: on the people themselves.

With ever-increasing technology and computerisation it makes sense that sooner or later people should be allowed to start planning their lives around the certainty of more leisure time. Better an element of choice and gradualism than the enforced "leisure" of early redundancies and unemployment - which is what the free market has meant in Britain (and of course in France so far).

That France, once again, shows a willingness to be mocked for its experiments in revolutionary imagination deters no francophile such as myself from believing that, as with pasteurisation, aviation, and the cinema, we shall be following in France's socially creative footsteps in a few years' time.

IAN FLINTOFF  
London SW6

## Democratic left

Sir: Your leading article of 20 February was right in drawing attention to the authoritarian way in which the Prime Minister sought to influence the choice of the Labour leader in Wales and his evident determination to deny individual members of the party in London even the right to nominate Ken Livingstone as a candidate for mayor.

But what you have overlooked is that almost all the campaigns for democracy in Britain and in the Labour Party have been led by the left.

It was the left that won the right of the British people to have a referendum on Europe in 1975, previously opposed by all the party leaders.

It was the left that extended the franchise for the election of the Labour Party leader, previously exercised by MPs only, to allow constituencies and affiliated trade unions to have a say through an electoral college, which was bitterly criticised at the time, but led to the election of Tony Blair in 1994.

And when, last week, the government whips issued instructions to Labour MPs to vote for a transitional House of Lords based entirely on patronage, the left voted against it.

By contrast, when the "New Labour" National Executive, in accordance with the Prime Minister's wishes, decided to vet all the names for the European elections, and put them in order, on a single party list, they denied the electors the right to vote for the individual candidates whom they support, which is a basic democratic right.

All candidates standing for the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly have also been vetted and this is how Dennis Canavan MP and Ian Davidson MP have been kept off the ballot paper.

In the next general election it is possible that the same centralised process will be used to deny some constituencies the right to select the candidates they want to represent them.

"New Labour" seems determined to squeeze democracy out of the party, and out of Parliament itself.

TONY BENN MP  
(Chesterfield, Lab)  
House of Commons  
London SW1

## Cash economy

Sir: I constantly hear about measures to encourage and help small businesses to open and prepare for the new world of electronic commerce.

Last week I needed, in a hurry, to transfer £600 from my current account with a major high-street bank to another of my current accounts with a different major bank.

After phone calls to both I was advised that the quickest and cheapest option was as follows: travel to a branch of bank number one and withdraw £600 in cash; travel to a branch of bank number two and hand it in over the counter. (This supposing, of course, that I could find one of the dwindling number of bank branches.)

Is anyone out there looking at how very large companies might be encouraged to prepare for the 21st century?

JANE PERRY  
Guildford, Surrey

## Lost in translation

Sir: Steve Boggan's report (20 February) about the pitfalls of English usage here and in the US reminded me of the son of a Texan friend and his wife. He was called Randolph and she Gynor and they came to London on business. At parties they introduced themselves charmingly with the words, "Hello, we're Gay and Randy." For a while they wondered why people looked a bit put out or muttered things like, "Jolly good" before edging away, until a kind colleague finally explained.

RICHARD GUNTER  
London W14

## A discerning palp on the pulse of our protean language

FROM TIME to time I like to bring you an update on the way the English language is evolving, with notes on the evolution of particular words as monitored by my tireless team of lexicographers and language mavens. Here, then, is our glossary supplement for February 1999.

Alternative: 1) Word used to describe ultra-conventional comedians who appear on quiz shows. *Question Time*, etc. etc; another word for mainstream.

2) Name given to a kind of medicine which is said to cure alternative diseases. (See "Complementary".)

Anal: Short-hand word for unrelated.

Analogue: See "Digital".

Complementary: Word used to

describe "alternative" medicine by people who don't like the word "alternative", as that makes it sound something like "alternative comedy". Luckily, there is no such thing yet as "complementary comedy".

Digital: See "Analogue". Director: thought he was making in the first place.

Drug: 1) Kind of chemical substance, very bad for you.

2) Kind of medicine, very good for you.

Epiphany: Word much used by reviewers, describing the moment of revelation when they suddenly see what the book or play they are reviewing is really all about.

Equity: Formerly a term for fairness and justice, now just a posh word for money.

Futon: A kind of Japanese instrument of torture on which the victim reclines to try to achieve spiritual enlightenment through discomfort.

Ginseng: Last year's elixir; wondrous then, forgotten now.

Graffiti: Kind of unsolicited public art.

Homophobia: *Homo* is the Greek word for "same" and *phobia* is Greek for "fear", so "homophobia" should mean "fear of anything or anyone the same as you". In fact, it means quite the opposite.

Investigative: Description given to any journalist who manages to get outside his office during working hours.

Leisure: An extremely strenuous activity pursued in gymnasiums by men and women in black underwear.



**MILES KINGTON**  
*Equity: Formerly a term for fairness and justice, now just a posh word for money*

Leopard: A manifestation of the theory that weightlifters' uniform looks good on women.

Multiculturalism: Tony Blair's theory that one man's beliefs are as good as another's, except Glenn Hoddle's.

Niche marketing: The amazing discovery by businessmen that if you provide something for people who want it, they will probably buy it. This is in contrast to the normal kind of marketing which consists in trying to persuade people to buy things which they had no idea they wanted and have no need of, and which make them fat, unhealthy or poor.

Novel: Name given to the first book written by an alternative comedian.

Public debate: Term given to exchange of headlines by popular newspapers - as in "Condon Must Go!" - from which the public is totally excluded.

Reincarnation: The mystical system which explains how we pay the penalty in this life for gaffes, boo-boos and public relations howlers which we have committed in a previous life. (See "Déjà Voo Doo".)

Paradigm: Yet another word for template.

Placebo: Kind of chalk and water tablet which is now thought to be more effective against most common ailments than ordinary medicine.

Reappraisal: Process whereby politicians agree to review some highly controversial public policy and then, when everything has been considered, go on exactly the same as before.

Reprisal: The theory held by the Americans that if you bomb an aspirin factory in the Sudan, ter-

rorists everywhere will lose heart and give up the struggle.

Special: A kind of very strong beer brewed for homeless people.

Symposium: Name given by academics to a business conference. (See "Piss-up".)

Synchronicity: The ability of swimmers in a pool to do the same ridiculous movements at exactly the same time.

Technical: Unknowable, inexplicable, unfathomable, as in: "We are sorry for the delay of this service, which is due to technical reasons".

Watershed: Name given to the time in the evening after which parents go to bed and leave their children watching television.

Work-out: A doomed attempt by leisure people to outwalk or out-bicycle a machine.



# THE INDEPENDENT

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## We must not ignore this huge gulf in school standards

"GIVE US a boy to the age of seven, and we will give you the man," reckoned the Jesuits. Dressed up in more gender-neutral language, the Government would agree. That is why it regards the primary school league table - which are published today, covering more than 13,000 schools in England and Wales - as so important. If the children are educated properly, the argument runs, there may be some hope for the teenagers.

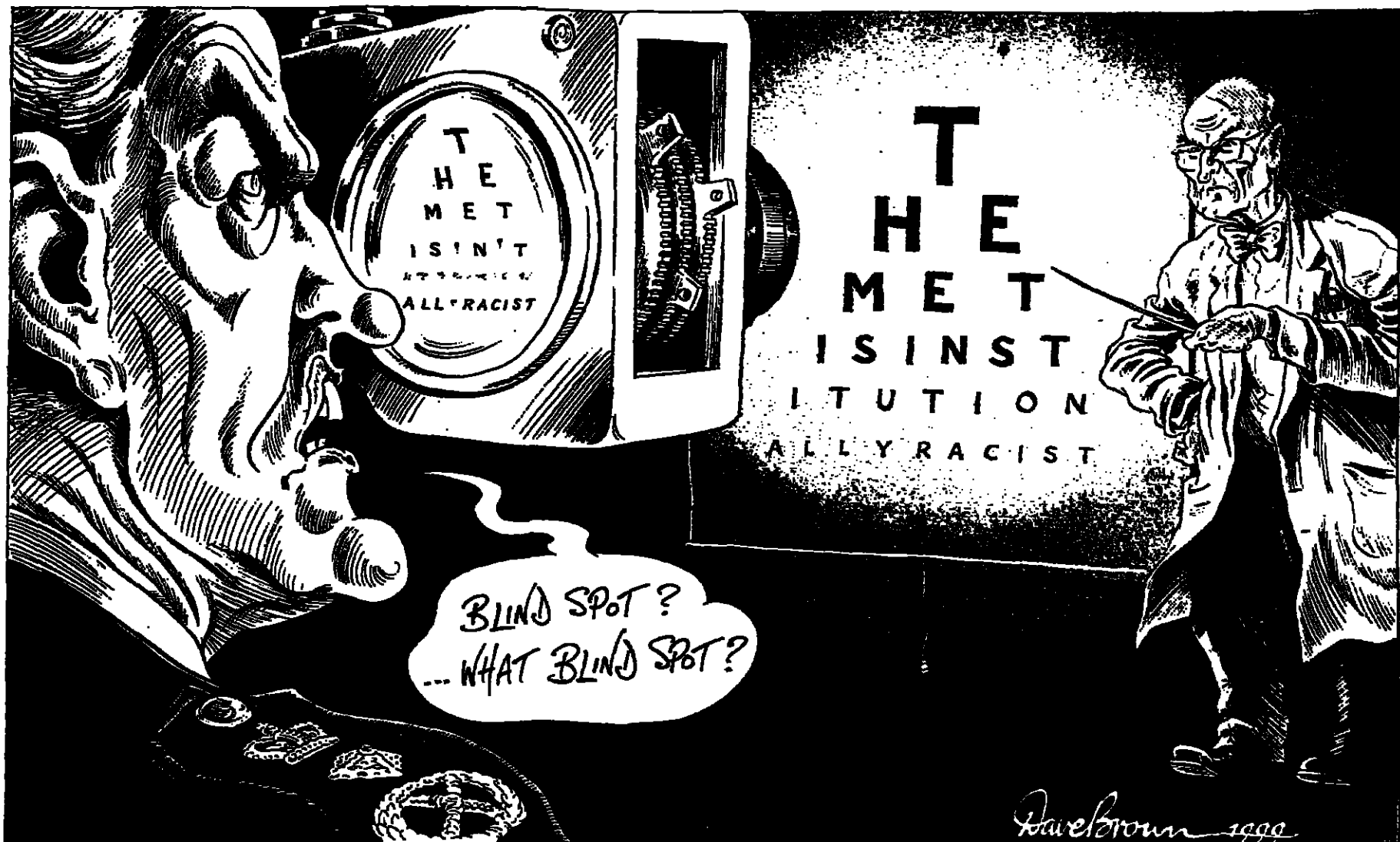
The Government proclaims that people want technocrats, not ideologues. Therefore, its stress on being able to deliver the basics. Therefore, too, the rather morose refrain "education, education, education". As part of its drive to improve schools, the Government has set standards which 11-year-olds must reach. In English, 80 per cent of children should have reached the standard by the end of this parliament, and 75 per cent in maths. The new league table shows that the initial acceleration towards these targets is now over. The number of children achieving the required standard in maths has fallen by 3 per cent from last year; in English, there is little movement.

The Government will blame this flattening of the learning curve in maths on the, admittedly popular, introduction of the teaching of mental arithmetic. But that explanation ignores the huge disparities there are between the schools at the top and those at the bottom of the league tables. In the worst school in the country, only 15 per cent of pupils achieved the required standard in English, and only 4 per cent in maths, while in the best 27 schools, all the children achieved the standard in both. Such vast differences between schools are unacceptable.

There are few surprises when we look at the tables and see where the good and the bad schools are: the best are in the two car suburbs to the west of London; the worst are in London's impoverished East End.

Such analyses can mask the great divisions that exist within regions - and that is where these tables can help both teachers and parents to expose incompetent practice. If neighbouring schools with similar pupils are achieving widely diverging results, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the fault lies either with the teachers or with their methods. Parents can use these tables to test the anecdotal evidence on the merits of their children's schools - though the tables would have been more useful if they had been published earlier in the academic year, when parents are deciding where to send their children.

Divisions among schools within the same local authority area will not disappear by having money thrown at them indiscriminately. Schools need innovative and inspirational headteachers if they are to maintain their momentum in the rough terrain ahead. Such teachers will not, and should not, come cheap.



## If no one wants peace, bombs won't help

WARREN CHRISTOPHER, the former US secretary of state, once described Bosnia as "the problem from hell". Kosovo is proving to be even worse.

Once again, Nato is on the verge of unleashing bombs on Serbian positions as yet another deadline is reached. And once again Slobodan Milosevic is taking the allies to the wire and possibly beyond. This time we need to be doubly cautious before committing ourselves to an act of war.

Threats of bombing have worked in the past as a means of curbing Serbian aggression against the ethnic Albanians of Kosovo, as they did eventually in constraining Serbian massacres in Bosnia. But on this occasion the US is waving the stick as a means of forcing a peace plan. It is by no means certain that the threats are as effective

or as necessary. For a start, the rights and wrongs of the two sides are not as clear. The peace proposals worked out in Rambouillet have been rejected not just by the Serbs but also by the Albanians, who look as if they want to use Nato intervention not to achieve a settlement, but to pursue their own agenda of complete independence.

At the same time, the use of force, far from frightening Belgrade, is threatening to divide the allies. While the Americans seem gung-ho, the Europeans are much less enthusiastic about unleashing the bombers in the face of Russian opposition, without more specific sanction from the UN. Nor are even the British convinced that the bombing alone can achieve its purpose.

That, even at this 11th hour, is what the West needs to remember in this continuing crisis. The objective is the acceptance by two sides of a peace proposal to give Albanian autonomy while preserving Serbian territorial integrity. The threat of force may aid the negotiations. But if neither side really wants peace, then bombing won't help.

## A game too far

THE NEWS that Camelot is applying to run another National Lottery prize draw is as predictable as it is unwelcome. Camelot wants to make as much money as it can while it still has the licence to run the National Lottery. But this natural desire to maximise profit is no reason for Oflot, the regulator responsible, to grant Camelot's request. Oflot would do well to ponder the plethora of existing channels by which mug punters are exploited.

There are lottery draws on Wednesdays and Saturdays and Instant scratch cards. There are "numbers" games run by the bookies. And you can still do the football pools, play the fruit machines, go to bingo, buy Premium Bonds and bet (by phone or the Internet) on anything from the Halo Dandy Novices' Chase at Carlisle, to whoever is to replace Paddy Ashdown at Westminster. Maybe, just maybe, Camelot's new scheme is a game too far.

# Condon should go, but there are worse demons still to be exorcised

THE NOISE, the noise! Just when we most need our wits about us, our senses are assailed by the plump walling of the media in distress. Jack Straw's (partially successful) attempt to inject the early appearance of the Macpherson Committee's report into the Stephen Lawrence investigation was misguided. But I am not going to go to the stake for a newspaper's inalienable right to scoop its rivals by three days; I have had all the journalistic narcissism that I can take.

And the Government's intervention also allowed a free hit for the Conservatives, with Sir Norman Fowler (he is, by the way, shadow Home Secretary) popping up on all outlets to champion freedom and to accuse Labour of control-freakery. Much less noticed will have been Sir Norman's own musings on the true topic of the week, the contents of the Macpherson report itself, or at least, what we know of them.

It is a fair bet that Sir William's phrase concerning the Metropolitan Police, that it suffers from and is corrupted by a "pernicious and institutionalised racism", will become part of contemporary history. Like other monsters that have haunted our recent past - anti-Semitism, violent homophobia and football hooliganism spring to mind - the image of an innately prejudiced, Alabama-style police force was supposed to have been long expunged by exposure to the new tolerance.

Acutely sensitive to the problems, a new generation of enlightened chief constables had got stuck in and instituted a programme of training,

awareness seminars, black recruitment and discipline. And none had done more than Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Met.

And then, in 1993, along came the Lawrence case. On weaker ground when talking about the case itself (since it had, after all, happened on his Party's manor, so to speak) Sir Norman Fowler moved from outright condemnation mode to downright incomprehensible mode. What, he was asked, did he think of the charge of institutionalised racism? Ah, he replied, if this meant that "every single police officer was racist", then that needed to be looked at. After all the Met was "one of the good institutions, not one of the bad". Sir Paul Condon, he felt, should stay, as his departure would send out a "very bad message".

If nothing else, this pathetic sequence of answers should remind us that it took Jack Straw (for all his authoritarian tendencies), only a few weeks to do what the Tories couldn't manage in four years, and to set up an inquiry in the first place. This is hardly surprising, for Sir Norman's combination of complacency and obfuscation mirrors the shortcomings exposed in what we have seen so far of the Macpherson report.

Now, Sir William is not God. The report and its conclusions are not infallible. Like jurors, we should treat what we read to our own critical processes, viewing it in the light of our own experience. But it seems to me that the Macpherson report has latched on to a central problem, which



DAVID AARONOVITCH

*The Met, whatever its resolutions, treats black people as inherently more criminal than white people*

most of us in the Met area know about, but which the Commissioner seemingly cannot comprehend. This is that his police force, whatever its resolutions, consistently treats black people as being inherently more criminal than white people.

This underlying prior judgement, made by many of the individuals in an institution, is what constitutes institutional racism, not, as Sir Paul appears to believe, ingrained discrimination on the part of its managers. It is a racism that can exist even when the canteen culture of "coons", "niggers" and "jungle-bunnies" has long been driven underground. And, lamentably, it is a racism that Sir Paul, his senior colleagues, and many of us who ought to know better, have given comfort to.

In recent years the Met has had to

account for the fact that its officers stop and search a disproportionate number of young black men. Almost invariably Sir Paul and others have fallen back on the "unpalatable truth" argument. In certain areas with high crime rates there happen to be large black populations suffering high rates of unemployment, and it is inevitable that operations in these areas will lead to a distortion of the figures.

But the alternative would be, it is suggested, to allow misguided political correctness to take over and to begin to stop and search white pensioners simply to balance the books. In other words, young black men get stopped a lot because young black men commit a whole lot of crime. Waddya want us to do?

Even passionate liberals have lazily bought into some of this argument. But just as most of us have some experience of crime, so also many of us have black friends and acquaintances who have been the victims of such prior judgements. To be a young black man in possession of a fast car is, in the eyes of the passing copper, to be a young black man in possession of something else. And this makes Condonian sense, because the young black man is more likely to be unemployed and thus to be paying for his ostentatious display of wealth by nefarious means.

But it is precisely this kind of calculation that contributed to the Lawrence case, and that constitutes the pernicious racism to which Macpherson refers. And it is the fact that Sir Paul cannot see it that means that he must go. Sir William is right

when he argues that "there must be an unequivocal acceptance of the problems of institutionalised racism and its nature before it can be addressed". The truth appears to be that when the police looked at Stephen Lawrence they could not see Stephen, but a young black man.

They are not, of course, alone. This sin of prior judgement - the assumption that you can know something important about somebody from appearance and impressions - is widespread. Ask asylum-seekers. When picking the mote out of the eye of the Met, we have some beams of our own to deal with. But Condon's inability to "get it" means that he cannot credibly lead the process of dismantling these assumptions.

Macpherson hints at the need for Condon to go, but does not recommend it. Of his other leaked recommendations, some seem to be pure common sense, some are worrying (such as the suggestion, possibly garbled, that private displays of racism be subject to prosecution) and others, such as the ability to retry a case after an acquittal, will require a great deal of argument. The most important relate to the pressing need to make the police complaints and disciplinary procedure more open and effective.

However there is one last warning to be added. It wasn't a policeman who stabbed Stephen Lawrence, and it isn't Sir Paul Condon's fault that the young man died. Listening to the exculpatory garbage from the mothers of those accused of the murder was chilling. We still have a long way to go before our worst demons are exorcised.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The new rule is: if anyone says it's a racial incident, then it is. Don't piss about."  
Sir Paul Condon,  
Metropolitan Police Commissioner

### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"A lie told often enough becomes the truth."  
Vladimir Ilych Lenin,  
Soviet leader

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THE DISPUTE on the subcontinent isn't about protein, of course. In fact, it's hard to say what it's about. Perhaps it's about habit - a cultivated hatred with nothing real at the core. But security concerns expressed by both countries are real and legitimate. When your neighbor is setting off explosions just over your back fence, you can't just shrug and keep pruning the rose bushes. But it's eerie to hear these two neighbors speaking about each

other as they do, and to hear them talking up the bomb as the latest modern convenience. It's an old story and it's hard to imagine a happy ending.  
Star Tribune, US

THE GOVERNMENT will be supported by most citizens in its efforts to build bridges with India. Some of us might call it a significant change, especially for a society that has remained unchanged for so long.  
As we have been saying time

## MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD  
World comment on India and Pakistan's agreement to reduce nuclear risk

and again, it is India that must provide the needed impetus for normalisation. It can help Pakistan overwhelm elements that seek war. The test is about to get under way, and we wish

both sides tons of good luck.  
Frontier Post, Pakistan

ONLY THE native will expect a dramatic breakthrough. There may even be occasional set-

backs. After all, there are curmudgeonly politicians and bureaucrats on both sides who would not like their pet hates to disappear suddenly. But Mr Vajpayee will still leave his mark on history if he succeeds. More than the agreements, and disagreements, therefore, what the combinations in Lahore have achieved is to put peace and friendship on top of the agenda, from which it will not be easy to dislodge them.  
Hindustan Times, India

THE OBJECTIVE of policy-makers must centre around normalising relations. India and Pakistan can aspire to be one nation again, but with a minor difference - they will be divided only by a border. There is more that binds these peoples together than separates them. Language, culture, a long and shared past are important ingredients necessary for building peace in the troubled subcontinent.  
The Pioneer, India



## PANDORA

THE SCENE: a pub, somewhere in London. Present is Pete Townshend, surrounded by a coterie of barflies and liggers. Why? Townshend is filming a promo for VH1, the cable channel for pop kids of a, ahem, certain age. The director, Jon Kane, wants a "loose conversational feel" for the spot, the drink flows freely and the cameras roll. Townshend begins reminiscing about seeing the Rolling Stones in the early Sixties. The guitarist recalls his gut reaction to watching Mick Jagger dance backstage: "It was the first time I realised that I wanted to sleep with a man." Excuse me, Mr Townshend? Kane reports: "When he said it, there was this sort of uncomfortable silence and then everyone started laughing." So, has the geriatric rock icon been smashing his guitar at both ends of the stage?

THE BBC missed a rather good story for its recent profile of Ian St John, the soccer legend who began his professional playing career at Motherwell, before going on to glory at Liverpool. As a nipper, the Saint was taken for his first football match by his dotting dad at the Motherwell ground. "It was a freezing cold Saturday afternoon, and the rain was pouring down. My father contracted pleurisy the same night, it turned to pneumonia - and then a few days later, he died." Tragic.

POINT YOUR mouse at the Hungarian government's website and you'll be soothed by the Muzak-esque sounds of Dire Straits' "Sultans of Swing". Take a tour of Downing Street's virtual venue, though, and all you'll hear are the sounds of silence. Well, obviously British pop talent is pretty thin on the ground, but c'mon guys, why not an Ugly Rumours demo tape? Or how about Dvorak's *New World*?

LAST WEEKEND saw the Hollywood premiere of the star Britflick, *Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*, where five minutes after the projector rolled, two figures were spied getting up and bailing out. The duo? *Lock Stock*'s director, Guy Ritchie, and his new squeeze, Madonna. Pandora followed them to a nearby pool hall, where Ritchie knocked a few balls around. What the hell, Ritchie's seen the flick a couple of thousand times. Only.

Madonna didn't want to play pool, so Ritchie suggested she fast-forward to the studio's lavish post-premiere party at SmashBox Studios. But so absorbed was Ritchie in his pool game that he'd overestimated his own film's running-time. Result: Madonna arrived at the party to find no one there. Did she stamp her Manolo Blahnik'd heel? No. She sat placidly with her distinctly edgy bodyguards for 20 minutes or so, while waiting for her man. Is this a tamer, meek, mild-style Madonna for the new millennium? Our Mr Ritchie must be quite a guy.

THE NAME Ivana Trump (pictured) has long been synonymous with literary excellence. So who better to pen a fragrant introduction to a delicate new book called *Italian Men: Love & Sex?* Italian stallions from Armani to Zeffirelli answer such pressing questions as: "Your sexual endowment - large, humungous or *molto grosso*?" The woman who put the "up" in "prenuptial" is probably better known to Pandora's readers for peddling KFC Zinger Tower Burgers. La Trump is clearly someone determined to take a bigger bite of publishing's meaty sandwich.

TWO FAMILY traditions found themselves head to head over lunch last Friday in the Lords. Tucking in his linen napkin is little Lord Archer, a fellow who's experienced a Damascene conversion to the Blairite way of modern meritocracy - since he was made a life peer, he hates hereditaries. Archer sits down at a table filled with... seven hereditaries who probe him as to his antecedents. "You're that fellow that wants to be Mayor of London, aren'tcha?" one asks. "The one who'd chuck us all out," Archer assents. "I'd lock every duke in the Tower of London." "Jeffrey," replied the Duke of Norfolk, "virtually all my ancestors have been locked in the Tower." Archer smiled, pondering, perhaps, a family tradition of his own - the reversal threatening his son, James, of the so-called Flaming Ferraris team of financiers, three of whom are under investigation for alleged irregularities.

Pandora can be contacted by e-mail on [pandora@independent.co.uk](mailto:pandora@independent.co.uk)

## It's brutal, it's selfish, it's sex today



TERENCE BLACKER

*Somewhere along the line something has changed, and the age-old search for pleasure has turned nasty*

All right, maybe the browse was not quite so innocent. Hearing one of the new, jaunty warnings of explicit content, nudity and bad language on TV does not have me reaching for the remote control. Like many people, I find a documentary revealing the peculiar things that people get up to in their personal lives incomparably more interesting than a hospital or detective drama,

or Rolf Harris going goo-goo over a sick hedgehog. I have even, during one of those lonely late-night moments, found myself investigating the kind of adult entertainment on Channel 5 that the channel has been accused by Lady Howe, who chairs the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, of transmitting purely for titillation's sake. It was unsatisfactory, possibly even unsavoury, her ladyship pronounced, ignoring the fact that many people, myself included, find more that is unsatisfactory or unsavoury in yet another of the endless programmes extolling comfy suburban values in the form of cooking, gardening or redecorating a flat.

Yet something odd does seem to be happening to sex. If Channel 5's *Compromising Positions* or *Hotline* presents a soft-focus fantasy version, the shows on the other channels might have been put together as a course in aversion therapy for sex addicts. There's nothing new, of course, in low-budget, slappers-and-slapheads porn, nor in the fondness of bored suburbanites for dinner parties that conclude with knickers-in-the-spin-dryer swap

games, but in the past these activities have belonged to the outer reaches of human experience.

Now their grubby, onanistic version of sex seems to have become part of everyday life. Americans spent \$8bn last year on pornography, rather more than they spent on hot dogs. Hollywood produced no fewer than 7,970 porn films. American students can now take porn studies, a discipline in which, presumably, experts such as Little Oral Annie will be offered honorary doctorates.

Everywhere we turn, whether it is to a ghastly, demeaning sitcom such as *Gimme Gimme Gimme* or to Bret Easton Ellis's best-selling novel *Glamorama* or the coy and self-consciously controversial *Sex and the City*, sex is presented as a harsh, solipsistic process in which each side is negotiating exclusively for his or her own short-term pleasure. Could it be, the frightening thought occurs, that this development is not mere fashion, an exploitative media trend, but the way it really is out there in the clubs and bars - sharp, greedy, brutal and, above all, selfish?

Of course, it is possible that the

Muggeridge effect is to blame. The writer Malcolm Muggeridge, you will remember, was famously promiscuous during the first half of his life. Then, almost overnight it seemed, the wind changed, the hormones calmed, a rictus of distaste descended upon the ageing features, and the ladykiller became St Mugg, a raving, God-bothering TV moralist forever inveighing against permissiveness and the misbehaviour of the young. Germaine Greer seems to have undergone a similar process, taking a hard line against casual sex these days, whereas, as Christine Wallace's forthcoming biography reminds us, her behaviour in the late Sixties and Seventies makes the *Sex and the City* girls seem as responsible as Lady Howe.

Perhaps I have reached the moment when I have become haunted by the ghost of St Mugg - but somehow I doubt it. Somewhere along the line something has changed, and the age-old search for pleasure has turned nasty. "How do you feel?" the lanky French pornography star of *Boogie Nights* in *Suburbia* was asked at the end of a hard day's humping. "I feel empty."

## What hope for democracy in Africa's most populous state?

NIGERIANS HAVE five days to decide who, as president, will lead them from military to civilian rule. The rest of the world - demob-happy at ending Nigeria's pariah status - is running out of time to decide what democratic guarantees to demand of the West African giant.

It matters. Nigeria is a world player. Ruled by the military for all but 10 of its 39 years of independence from Britain, Nigeria is the world's fifth-biggest oil producer on the planet, with a population of more than 100 million. This population represents Africa's biggest market.

It gives us great footballers (Okechika, Babayaro), musicians (Fela, Seal) and writers (Soyinka, Achebe). But it could give much more. It could become a model for the kind of new, democratic Africa that we all want to see. Nigeria as an aspirational beacon for the values of the free world? Well, that is what we must hope for. It is why these elections are so crucial.

On Saturday, all around this vast and varied country, Nigerians will filter through green-and-white fabric booths and place their thumb-print beside the name of Olusegun Obasanjo's People's Democratic Party (PDP), or that of Olufemi Abacha, now of the All People's Party.

In the local, gubernatorial and parliamentary elections so far, the PDP has been dominant. But now the race is between two men, and the voters' choices will be based largely on ethnicity or the allegiances of elders, not on issues.

Obasanjo is the 61-year-old retired general who in 1979 became the only military dictator to hand power to an elected government and was later imprisoned for an alleged coup plot against the late and tyrannical General Sani Abacha.

A Yoruba from the economically

ALEX DUVAL SMITH  
*Even as the West gives Nigeria's elections a clean bill of health, there are many dangers ahead*

powerful south west, Obasanjo is viewed with suspicion in some parts of the country. Many Yorubas say he is a traitor who favours the northern ruling classes, dominant in the military top brass. In 1979, the man to whom he handed power was Shehu Shagari, a Hausa-Fulani from the north. In the east, he is viewed with caution. He headed a commando division in the Nigerian army which quashed Biafran independence there in the 1967-70 civil war.

But Obasanjo today brims with jocular charm, and has shrewdly endowed himself with a statesman's mantle. He has held prominent positions in various United Nations bodies and in the Commonwealth. He is on first-name terms with the former US president Jimmy Carter, who is an observer of these elections.

Obasanjo is allegedly funded by the military, especially the former dictator, General Ibrahim Babangida - cruel and corrupt in his day but now orchestrating the military's face-saving transition to civilian rule. Obasanjo's running-mate, Abubakar Atiku, may pacify some

Yorubas. He was the northern kingmaker to their late hero, Moshood Abiola, winner of the presidential elections in 1993 which were promptly cancelled by the military.

Falae, aged 60, is in many ways dwarfed by his opponent. He is also hampered by the fact that pre-printed ballot papers give voters the confusing choice of three parties - the PDP, the APP and the Alliance for Democracy (AD), with which Falae started out.

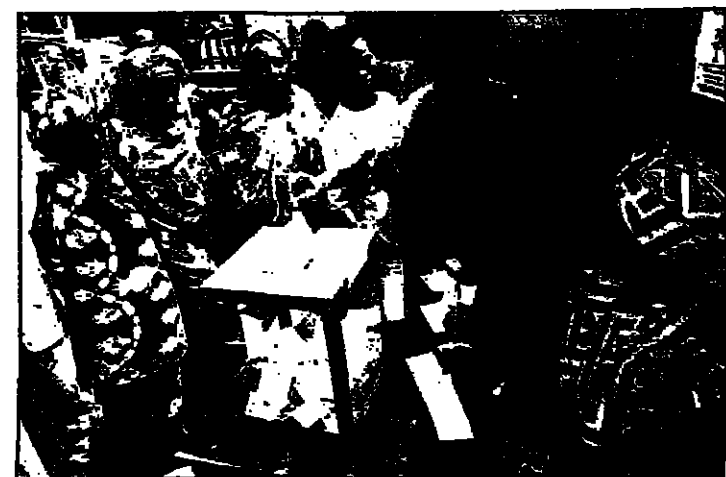
Votes for AD will not be recognised on Saturday, the Independent Electoral Commission has ruled.

But Yoruba nationalism will hand him victory in Lagos and in Obasanjo's home town, Abeokuta. Thanks to his strait-laced running mate, Umaru Ali Shinkafa, a Muslim conservative who was once the chief of the secret police, Falae will win the poor north-east and north-west.

Falae, a Yale-educated free-marketeer who believes that the best way to end corruption is to scrap official controls, served in the late Eighties as finance minister under General Babangida. Earnest, slightly humourless but intellectually razor-sharp, Falae is considered an economics wizard but is also blamed for having implemented a disastrous structural adjustment programme. He has strong Yoruba credentials for having backed Abiola in 1993 and having been imprisoned for "bomb-throwing" under General Abacha.

Even though both candidates have promised that there will be no witch hunts against embezzlers within the military, Obasanjo is their favourite. But a victory for Obasanjo could be too much to bear for the highly politicised and economically powerful south-west.

If the Yorubas broke away so, probably, would the Igbo of the east, leading to chaos and maybe even civil war. Youths in the southern



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states who are currently kicking up a rough against exploitation of their land by oil companies and the regime could easily channel their anger into rebel movements along Sierra Leonean lines.

On the other hand, a victory for Falae could be intolerable for the military, leading either to a puppet government or to a rerun of 1994 when General Abacha cancelled the poll which, the previous year, had elected President Abiola.

Even as the European Union and the United States give this Saturday's elections a clean bill of health - as they almost certainly will, despite documented discrepancies - the world must consider the many potential dangers that lie ahead.

Ever since General Abacha, in 1998, executed nine environmental campaigners, including Ken Saro-Wiwa, Nigeria has been the pariah state of choice for the Commonwealth and the United Nations. This Saturday's elections - likely to lead to a formal handover to civilian rule on 29 May - are supposed to mean an end to all that, and great opport-

unities for business. Royal Dutch/Shell has already signalled its approval with a pledge to spend \$8.5bn in Nigeria - sub-Saharan Africa's biggest-ever industrial investment.

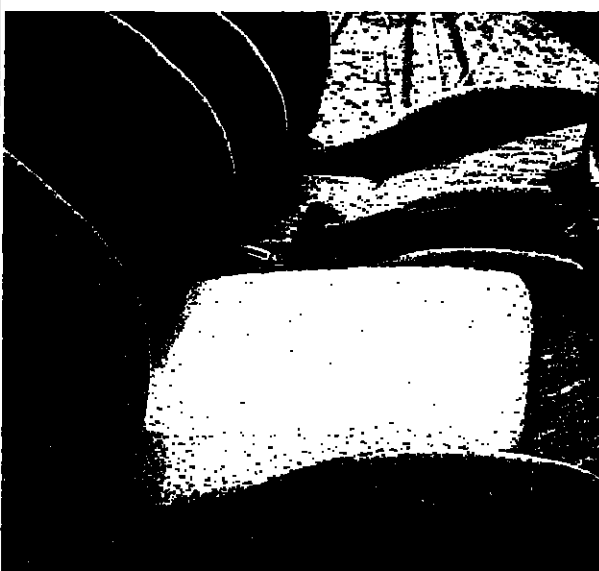
But Nigeria, the world's fifth-greatest oil producer, will enter its new era on its knees, economically. The price of oil - the resource which accounts for 96 per cent of the country's exports - is now languishing at rock bottom. There is no infrastructure, while leprosy, AIDS and illiteracy - all the worst ills of Africa - are widespread.

Political prisoners from Abacha's era still languish in jail and Human Rights Watch, in a report published today, will document continuing abuses. The country does not even have a constitution.

The success of Nigeria's transition to civilian rule will not be determined so much by who wins this Saturday's elections, as by how responsibly an eager outside world tailors its relationship with the demob-suited generals. It will be a vital task, and a novel situation for all concerned.

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## Wanted: popular new operas



PODIUM

DAVID POUNTNEY  
From the third annual  
Royal Philharmonic  
Society lecture, given  
by the opera director  
and producer in London

theatrical craftsmanship, a contempt that, of course, implies an equally unhealthy contempt for the public that is so slow to understand and appreciate their work.

Opera has lost a huge swath of its natural audience because it has forgotten how occupy its natural bridgehead in the commercial sector - a sector that is, in reality, only just round the corner, not a million miles away. Of course, opera houses

do do *Show Boat*, *West Side Story* and *Sondheim*, especially away from the highly specialised commercial sector that we have in London. And our two National Theatre companies have made a mint from ventures into musicals.

But I am not talking about revivals. I am no more interested in arguing that opera houses should be mounting revivals of musical gems of the past, than I am in pushing for a Hindemith cycle at Covent Garden. What interests me for the future of opera is that people can still write successful new musicals - and lots of bad ones, too - but nobody writes successful new operas, except perhaps Mr Adams and Mr Glass. Why not? Fundamentally, I suspect, because they are not really trying to. People who write musicals are governed by a harsh discipline: failure is very expensive; success is a bonanza. And the ultimate judge is the public.

In the arid landscape of new opera, there is no such discipline save the composer's conscience, and no judges save the tiny circle of his peers. Far from the public being the ultimate judge, the public in this case

gets the blame for being "conservative" or "lazy" when a new opera is a worthy failure.

So who should be telling composers to work harder for real public success? The management! That is their job, but it is one which, in the face of a completely out-of-date, romantic concept of the inalienable rights of the artist, the management has by and large abdicated. It would be a far healthier situation if management would make the decision that a new opera should be much more like a new musical than a new opera.

There will always be a place for difficult new works. But the era when to be difficult was the first precondition of being acceptable has passed, and had better be swept away rapidly in time for the new century. Opera has seen the musical walk off with many of the best bits in its wardrobe; get them back. Find the stories that speak to people, and find the music that makes them want to listen. That is the real meaning of that horrible word "accessibility", never forget Coward's famous line: "Ah, the power of cheap music!"



# Does money buy happiness?



**HAMISH MCRAE**

*Moguls are dreaming up yet more sophisticated objects for the new super-rich to buy*

MAYBE MONEY can't buy you love, but perhaps it can buy you happiness. The shop-till-you-drop, "retail therapy" culture may have become more dominant in the last few years, particularly in the US and UK, which have seen seven or eight years of solid consumer growth. But are we really any happier for it?

One person who thinks we are not is Robert Frank, a US economics professor whose new book, *Luxury Fever*, has been causing a bit of a stir in the States. He believes that we live in an age of "profound waste". The very rich spend their money on Cartier watches, Lexus sports cars, Prada trousers and, at the top of the range, Gulfstream jets. Yet they are still dissatisfied. The world's industrial moguls are dreaming up yet more sophisticated objects for the new super-rich to buy (I heard the other day from a Gulfstream executive that they are looking at a supersonic executive jet that will fly faster than Concorde), to the general detriment of Western societies as a whole.

Of course, there is nothing new in this. A hundred years ago the economist Thorstein Veblen drew attention to the "conspicuous consumption" of the rich, and the social damage it caused. More recently, in the Sixties, the British economic journalist Fred Hirsch identified "positional goods" - goods by their nature rare, such as Impressionist paintings, or a Queen Anne house - and worried about the way in which the rich bid up the prices for them and so add to inflation.

Nevertheless the burst of consumerism in the US, which has pushed the saving rate into negative territory, gives a new bite to these well-rehearsed concerns, which is probably why Professor Frank's book has attracted such attention. His solution, insofar as there is one, falls into two parts. First, we should all try to focus attention more on "inconspicuous consumption", spending time with family and friends, going for walks in the country, being free from traffic congestion, and so on. Second, he believes public policy could help to shift this balance by scrapping income tax and imposing a progressive consumption tax on families: the more they spent in any one year, the higher the tax rate would be. If additional money were raised, it could be used to fund government investment in public goods.

You don't need to buy the whole thesis to feel that there is something a touch distasteful about excesses of consumption. Not many of us would like to see a family consumption tax, particularly if it were used to fund public projects such as the Millennium Dome, but most of us would accept that, despite the enormous rise in living standards of most people in developed countries over the last 40 years, people are not much happier as a result.

This common-sense judgement is supported by academic evidence. Economists now study happiness, trying to measure how happy people are and what makes them happier. Sadly for shopaholics, it seems that "retail therapy" is not particularly effective. It may have some slight effect: Warwick University's Andrew Oswald, a leading authority on the economics of happiness, found that between 1970 and 1990 there was a slight relationship

between wealth and happiness. But it seems that it is really only at the very bottom of the income scale that the amount of money people have influences how happy they are. Relative wealth, how rich people are compared with the people round about them, seems to matter more than absolute wealth.

The reaction of many people to this will be to say: "Hold on a moment, how do they know whether people are happy or not?" In fact it is possible to make some measurements, partly by asking people whether they feel happy, but also by measuring things such as stress levels. You can also look at suicide and attempted suicide rates - apparently attempted suicide is much more common than is generally appreciated - and make some judgements from that.

So what do we know about happiness? One of Professor Oswald's latest findings is that in relative terms the young are becoming happier, which is great for the (relatively youthful) readers of this newspaper. Not so good news is the finding that all other groups are becoming less

happy. The unemployed tend to be unhappy, which is a powerful moral argument not just for encouraging general economic growth, but also for encouraging people into jobs where possible. And - a particularly troubling finding - it seems that black people are less happy than white people.

Any pointers to policy? If relative wealth were more important than absolute wealth, you might imagine that societies that are more egalitarian are happier than those that are not. But in fact that does not seem to be the case, either here in the UK or elsewhere. Thus international studies suggest that Japanese people are not particularly happy, despite the small income differentials there, while Brazilians are relatively happy despite their very large differentials.

So is there nothing that governments can do to make their citizens happier? Well, there is one very interesting study about to come out, by Professor Bruno Frey, of Zurich University. He has found that the more democracy there is - and remember that Switzerland is

strong on that - the happier people become. We cannot do anything about our age or our race, but if we become happier the more democratic control we feel we have, then that is something to hang on to. I suppose devotion could be justified as passing more democracy to Scottish and Welsh people, even if the latter have had a chap imposed on them by Downing Street. Maybe Londoners will feel happier if they can vote for the mayor of their choice. And the way to make the English happier would, I suppose, be to remove Scottish and Welsh MPs from the Westminster Parliament, so that the English, too, would feel they had more control over their affairs. Um...

Given that any individual's control over the level of democracy is minimal, and given that spending money does not seem to bring more happiness, what should we all do to make ourselves happier?

A couple of years ago David Lykken, a psychologist at the University of Minnesota, wrote a book called *Happiness*, in which he studied a large group of identical twins

who had been separated at birth. At the time he concluded that happiness was genetically determined: people were either born happy or not. "Trying to be happier is as futile as trying to be taller."

Now, according to a recent article in *The New Yorker*, he thinks he was wrong. People still have set points of happiness, but, he believes, they can lift their level of happiness above those points by learning some new habits, such as keeping busy, taking regular exercise and, apparently, getting married.

I'm not sure what his advice would be for people who are already frantically busy, who go to the gym three times a week, who have been married for years, and despite all that are still profoundly miserable. However, put together his view that people can lift their happiness and the evidence that young people are becoming happier, and there may be a clue. We cannot, of course, become any younger, but we can perhaps think younger.

That, plus just a little bit of retail therapy, a few drinks, a few parties... doesn't it sound more fun?



It's the lifestyle and not wealth that makes society girls like, from left to right, Tamara Beckwith, Annabel Elwes and Tara Palmer-Tomkinson seem so happy Richard Young

## RIGHT OF REPLY

**MICHAEL WILKS**



The chairman of the BMA's ethics committee replies to an article calling for compulsory organ donation

HOW FAR can society go in requiring its citizens to be altruistic, and at what point does the balance shift between the rights of the dying and the living? These ethical questions lie at the heart of the debate about organ donation.

Professor John Harris stakes out the claims of the living. He argues that those whose lives might be saved by organ transplantation take precedence over those who are reluctant to have their bodies tampered with after their death.

He draws an analogy with post-mortem examinations, for which consent is not required. But that is a false parallel. There is a difference.

In addition to the very different purposes for which the organs are taken, there is of course the natural feeling that a patient whose heart is beating, even if artificially aided, is different from a corpse.

Doctors have a duty to act in the patient's individual best interests, until the moment of death. This distinction is important because if the public began to feel that dying patients were seen in a utilitarian light as a source of spare parts, then support for the transplantation programme would collapse overnight.

The BMA's medical ethics committee would want to tread much more cautiously. We believe it is reasonable to hope that most people will be willing to donate their organs and to shift the balance in favour of transplant recipients by moving to a system of "presumed consent". But we do not believe it is reasonable to require donation. It remains to be seen whether the BMA and the medical profession as a whole will support a change from an opt-in to an opt-out system. John Harris's intervention is likely to polarise feelings and undermine the interests of those he is most concerned to help.

# The road to Iraq and ruin?

FOR MUCH of this century, sanctions have been a preferred instrument of the centre and left. In the Thirties they were favoured by advocates of the League of Nations against aggressor states; in the Sixties and Seventies as an instrument against racist regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia. Today, however, the tide has turned: there is a widespread sense, in the UN and elsewhere, that sanctions are being used to excess by the UN and, even more so, by the US.

Geoff Simons belongs to the anti-sanctions camp. His brisk history of sanctions highlights their cost, in war and peace, for civilian populations. Recent sanctions by the US - against Cuba, Libya and, above all, Iraq - are, he argues, both genocidal and illegal. They are intended to starve civilians, and, in Iraq's case, are voted in by a UN Security Council acting under coercion. Iraq is now a "concentration camp", reduced to penury and disease; a "new Holocaust" is in the making.



## TUESDAY BOOK

**IMPOSING ECONOMIC SANCTIONS: LEGAL REMEDY OR GENOCIDAL TOOL?**  
BY GEOFF SIMONS. PLUTO PRESS, £12.99

On Iraq, Simons's history is fore-shortened. Iraq was a concentration camp long before the UN declared sanctions. His bibliography does not appear to include Samir al-Khalil's work *Republic of Fear*. Starvation, mass deportation and chemical attacks on the civilian population were all features of Iraq in the Eighties. This is relevant to an assessment of the present, because it shows that the Iraqi government is prepared to impose dire suffering on its own people.

In the period since the imposition of UN sanctions, the Iraqi government has played an important role in enforcing the penury and starvation

that Simons denounces. It was Baghdad that, until 1996, refused all offers of substantial oil exports, because these would be under international control. It was Baghdad which last June refused all Arab offers of food and medical supplies.

Anyone reading Simons would think that there was a ban on food and medicine exports to Iraq - as the US has indeed placed on Cuba. No such ban exists. In December 1997, Baghdad imposed a 21-fold increase in the cost of the individual food ration, intending thereby to maximise the revenue it would receive from the sale of food supplies - and, arguably, to prolong the starvation of its people.

Claims that Iraq still lacks the means to provide a basic supply of food are belied by its other activities: the construction of palaces and large mosques, the clandestine import of weapons, the ostentatious lifestyle of the elite. Iraq is now entitled, under UN resolutions, to export \$10.5bn of oil a year, more than half of what it earned before sanctions.

That, plus the considerable resources which Iraq has for agricultural production, should be sufficient to feed its population. Iraq has considerable agricultural potential: more than 20 per cent of its land area is cultivable, a higher percentage than that of China. Its wheat and barley output rose 15 per cent last year, enough to enable it to export to Syria and Jordan.

There remain serious problems in Iraq because of the impact of five years of complete obstruction by the regime and its continued manipulation - and



Despite sanctions, vintage US cars keep Cubans moving Geraint Lewis

thrift, of resources intended for its people. These have been highlighted in reports on the human rights situation by the UN Special Rapporteur, Max van der Stoep.

Simons also dodges the reasons - a pattern of aggression and violation of international controls on biological and chemical weapons - that prompted the sanctions in the first place. On these security issues, he has nothing to offer except collusive indignation. Should Saddam be allowed to continue to use the starvation of his people as a weapon against international controls? No. The area that needs rigorous attention is Iraq's import of military materials. Ending the controls on oil exports, conditional on military controls and inspection, would remove this weapon from the regime.

The general case against sanctions is weaker than Simons indicates. Sanctions are like any other instruments of pressure, be they legal restraints in domestic politics or war in the international realm. They are capable of abuse, or of being properly applied. The imposition of sanctions on Cuba is a clear example of abuse:

a vindictive and cruel policy. However, sanctions played a significant role in forcing change in South Africa in the Eighties. Simons understates this, ignoring the impact of the US investment ban pushed through by the black caucus in Congress. One day, states may be liable to the imposition of sanctions for discrimination based on gender, as they once were for discrimination based on race.

Behind these discussions lies not the issue of sanctions, but the legitimacy of coercive behaviour by the more powerful states in the world. Coercive, discriminatory, selective they certainly are; but this does not mean that no such actions are ever valid. The internationalist activism that confronts Iraq is the same that bombed the Bosnian Serbs, may now act to protect Kosovo, and that seeks to try Pinochet. Recycled anti-imperialism is an insufficient response to the crises of the contemporary world.

FRED HALLIDAY

The reviewer is professor of international relations at the London School of Economics

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## TUESDAY POEM

**SNAPS**  
BY ROBERT MINNINICK

After the rain the small rockpools  
Glitter like a switchboard.  
The girls wait by the photobooth  
Until the card of snaps slides down the chute.  
Impossible, they clutch themselves  
And stagger, hurt with laughter  
In a wild circle. All strangers these,  
For whose face matches the idea of self,  
That coveted identity, closed like a locket,  
The first secret? They've snarled and pouted,  
Hid themselves behind the mask of the absurd.  
The images come glossy, wet,  
Like something born.

This poem comes from Robert Minninnick's  
*'Selected Poems'* (Corcanet Press, £6.95)

# Sarah Kane

SARAH KANE was a contemporary writer with a classical sensibility who created a theatre of great moments of beauty and cruelty, a theatre to which it was only possible to respond with a sense of awe. Hers was a sensibility that Shakespeare or Sophocles or Racine would have recognised but that was often abrasive for a modern audience and, it seems, incomprehensible to most critics. For those used to the reassurances of sociology or psychology in plays, the austere beauty of Kane's work was a shock to the system.

She was born in 1971, the daughter of a journalist, and brought up in Brentwood in Essex. Till the age of 17 she was a fervent born-again Christian, and then made a conscious decision to reject God. She hated the values of suburban south-east England: "There is an attitude that certain things could not happen here. Yet there's the same amount of abuse and corruption in Essex as anywhere else, and that's what I want to blow open," she said.

At Bristol University, she read Drama, and was awarded a First. She then attended David Edgar's MA in play-writing at Birmingham University. Shortly after she finished, in January 1996, her play *Blasted*, exploring the nature of violence and war (set in a Leeds hotel room that erupts into a Bosnian war scene) was staged in London at the Royal Court.

Upstairs; it created a media storm. At Bristol, Kane had been deeply affected by Edward Bond's play *Saved* (indeed, only a couple of weeks ago, she said to me: "You can learn everything you need to know about the craft of play-writing from *Saved*." "I was deeply shocked by the baby being stoned," she explained).

But then I thought, there isn't anything you can't represent on stage. If you are saying you can't represent something, you are denying its existence... My intention was to be absolutely truthful about abuse and violence. All of the violence in the play has been carefully plotted and dramatically structured to say what I want about war.

In the spring of 1996, I sat down reluctantly to read *Blasted*. The year before I had followed the furor surrounding its opening and thought it sounded terrible: a collage of shock tactics masquerading as theatre. I

wasn't going to waste my time reading such a shabby little stocker. But *Blasted* blew me away. From the first few lines, I knew I was in the hands of a playwright with total mastery of her craft. The dialogue was honed, so lean and tough and expressive that I would have been gripped with jealousy if I hadn't been so gripped. And as the play progressed it was clear Kane had got the structure sorted, as well, controlling perfectly the momentum so that its conclusion was logical and awful and beautiful.

Edward Bond was an obvious influence, and there was quite a lot of Beckett in there as well. But as I read *Blasted* - with its great passions locked in a small room - I was constantly reminded of Racine. And

*'I'm not a brand name, I'm a person,' she snarled when we asked her to do some publicity for last play, *Crave**

as I finished reading it I knew that Sarah Kane was a great writer and that practically every theatre critic in London was a fool.

When, a few months later, I became literary manager for the touring company Paines Plough, I decided to ask Kane to be writer in residence. I waited nervously in a bar in Soho for our first meeting, expecting someone tall and fierce and difficult. She was, of course, nothing of the sort: small, almost vulnerable, she spoke thoughtfully and quietly, occasionally allowing a naughty smile to light up her face.

Unlike many of the Selfish Young Men having their first plays produced at the time, she was informed and enthusiastic about the work of up-and-coming writers (she'd read hundreds of scripts for the Bush Theatre) and had thought deeply about the craft

of the playwright and was prepared to pass her skills on to others. And so, after a bit too much beer, she agreed to join Paines Plough and proved to be an excellent script reader and an outstanding teacher.

When, soon after meeting her, I saw Kane's second play *Phaedra's Love* at the Gate, I realised she was now speaking above the heads of the English critics to a much wider constituency. Directors, dramatists and translators from all over Europe crammed into the tiny space to see the play and many of them were planning productions of *Blasted*.

*Phaedra's Love*, loosely based on a story already treated by Seneca, Euripides and Racine, had a fantastic sardonic anti-hero in Hippolytus and a terrific coup de théâtre towards the end as what had seemed to be a chamber play was invaded by a mob.

But it was disappointing after the near perfection of *Blasted*. Kane had written it quickly, and - I think feeling uncertain that the text would work - had decided to direct the play herself, a job she did very well.

She now started to travel widely - spending time in New York at a playwrights' retreat and seeing various European productions of *Blasted*, not many of them to her taste. In the summer of 1997, she gave me a copy of her play *Cleanse* to read; set in a concentration camp built in a former university, I was thrilled to see that it was good, if not better than *Blasted*. Yes, there were plenty of violent bits for her detractors to criticise, but what was extraordinary about the play was its faith in the overwhelming redemptive power of love. "Brilliant, Sarah," I said, "very Puccini." She smiled. "Yeah, well, I'm in love."

A couple of months later, she directed Buchner's *Woyzeck* at the Gate. It was brave but disturbing. In an already bleak play she'd removed any possibility of the slightest moment of redemption for any of the characters. I told her it was just about the bleakest thing I'd ever seen. "Yeah, well, I fell out of love," she said.

I realised later what a terrible understatement that was. Around about that time, Kane fell out of love with life. And so began great, harrowing cycles of depression, self-hate and hospitalisation. She knew that she was loved by many people and she had a solid understanding of her own talent, but she was drawn constantly to thoughts of suicide.

It wasn't all misery in those last 18 months. James Macdonald's production of *Cleanse* at the Royal Court in the spring of 1998 gave her

great pleasure. She was thrilled to see the production team had discovered an aesthetic that realised the austere, grand theatricality of her work. And she loved taking over the role of Grace for the last few performances after Suzanne Sylvester was taken ill. What was it like to be in her own play? "It's not like being in your own play," she said. "Because that play was written by someone who had hope."

And then there was her last play, *Crave* (in which four voices discuss obsessive love), produced by Paines Plough last autumn. Feeling trapped by people's expectations of the now world famous Sarah Kane ("I'm not a brand name, I'm a person," she snarled at us when we asked her to do some publicity for Paines Plough), Kane initially wrote the play under a pseudonym, Marie Kelvedon. Marie gave her the licence to ex-

periment with another part of her voice and the result was a dense, beautiful poem that proved that she was a hugely versatile talent.

A couple of weeks ago I met up with Sarah Kane and, as playwrights do, we took to drinking beer and pontificating about our craft. "You know," she said, "most good playwrights write seven good plays and then something happens and after that they're crap." We started going through lists of the greats and, with a few exceptions, we decided that she was right. "I'm not far off my allotted seven," she said. "Bollocks," I said. "You're only just over halfway through." "Yeah. Suppose," she said.

MARK RAVENHILL

Sarah Kane, playwright: born 3 February 1971; died London 19 February 1999.



Kane, right, with Vicky Featherstone, the director of her play *Crave*, at the 1998 Edinburgh Festival

Geraint Lewis

## Gene Siskel



*Film exhibitors and companies hung on their every word - hoping for the two thumbs-up from Siskel & Ebert*

WHEN THE film critic Barry Norman left BBC's *Film 98* and joined Sky Premier last year, the announcement barely ruffled the pages of the British press. In North America, Gene Siskel's death was headline news over the weekend.

Alongside the avuncular Roger Ebert, the tall, balding Siskel developed a film reviewing style which made their syndicated television show required viewing for Hollywood executives and dedicated US filmgoers. Their 25-year partnership pioneered the Roman emperor-like thumbs-up and thumbs-down verdict and effortlessly connected with the mainstream audience to such an extent that their programme was even successfully sold overseas (BBC 2 bought it in 1992).

Born in 1928, Gene Siskel was orphaned before his 10th birthday but he did not have a miserable childhood. With his brother and sister, he was raised in Illinois by an aunt and an uncle who already had three children of their own. The movies held such fascination for the young Gene that, every Saturday, he would walk eight blocks to the nearest cinema to catch the latest releases.

A *Star is Born* and a *Streetcar Named Desire* made a great impression on him. He remembered

seeing the Ella Kazan film "in the back seat of the car and hearing people yell and scream. I grew up in a very happy house where I didn't hear that. There was definitely something potent there, it was adult. That's what the movies meant to me."

Siskel gained a philosophy degree from Yale University in 1967 and intended to become a lawyer. Two years later, a letter of recommendation from a Yale tutor, the author John Hersey, helped him land a job at The Chicago Tribune. Starting as a local reporter, Siskel wrote a review of Walt Disney's *The Reason*, the story of a boy and his pet raccoon, and was promoted to film critic.

Roger Ebert, a writer who had dreamed up the plot of Russ Meyer's infamous *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*, was already established in the same role at the rival *Chicago Sun-Times* and, in the early Seventies, the two competed ferociously for the latest movie scoop. "We intensely disliked each other," recalled Siskel. "We perceived each other as a threat to our well-being," added the journalist who had launched *Best Siskel*, a contest in which readers tried to beat him in predicting Oscar winners. He remained a strong critic of the Academy Awards.

In 1974, Siskel began providing reviews and features for WBBM-TV,

the CBS affiliate in Chicago. The following year, Eliot Wald, a producer at WTTW (the local station was part of the Public Broadcasting System network), thought about exploiting the critics' rivalry and notoriety on a television show. "These were two men who would never have chosen each other for friends," said Thea Flaum, the programme's executive producer. "But TV forced them to find a way to work together."

Against all odds, the two personalities, at first reluctant to collaborate, developed a natural chemistry. Of course, there were arguments but any debate and disagreement only enhanced the show's appeal. From local beginnings and tacky tactics such as introducing the "Dog of the Week" with a canine co-presenter, or the "Stinker of the Week" with a skunk, *Opening Soon at a Theater Near You* became slicker and evolved into *Sneak Previews*, reaching a national audience when it was syndicated on PBS in 1978.

Four years later, the duo gained a sponsor for the renamed *At the Movies*, with Tribune Entertainment. Subsequently, the pair joined Buena Vista Television, a division of the Walt Disney Company which changed the show's name to *Siskel & Ebert at the Movies*. Film exhibitors and companies

were hanging on their every word, hoping for that essential box-office boost: the two thumbs-up or the Siskel & Ebert quote they could add to the posters on opening weekend. Paul Dergarabedian, spokesman for the Exhibitor Relations Co, said that "the duo took film criticism into the mainstream. The average person would look to them about where to spend their hard-earned dollars at the box office." The film director Robert Altman, whose Nashville had been an early tip from Siskel & Ebert, admitted that "they were a positive thing. Several shows tried to emulate them and failed."

Siskel often attributed the pair's success to the fact that they operated from Chicago. "We're between the media capital (New York) and the movie capital (LA), and so we don't get romanticized, and we don't keep running into the people." By the mid-Eighties, the co-hosts were indeed extremely powerful, very famous (they appeared on Johnny Carson's chat show in 1985) and rather rich. Gene Siskel could even afford to buy the three-piece white suit and black shirt John Travolta wore in *Saturday Night Fever*, a movie Siskel had seen 17 times (when he sold the clothes at auction 16 years later, in 1995, he fetched \$92,000, giving him a \$31,000 profit).

Other of his favourites included *Citizen Kane*, *The Godfather*, *Dr Strangelove*, *The General*, *Tokyo Story*, 2001: *A Space Odyssey*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *Pinochio* and *Shoah*. His top films of the last five years included *Hoop Dreams*, *Crumb*, *Fargo*, *The Ice Storm* and, surprisingly, *Babe: Pig in the City*, panned by most critics.

Though he became a contributor to CBS television's *This Morning*, the best-selling weekly TV Guide and various other magazines such as *Sports Illustrated*, Siskel didn't think he was overdoing it. "I do not view myself as a workaholic but as basically lazy," said the committed family man and Chicago Bulls basketball fan. "I'm not a natural like Mr Ebert. But I still have my enthusiasm for the job and you can't fake that. My fantasy is that, in another 40 years, Roger and I will have attendant nurses and we'll still do the show."

Last May, Siskel had surgery to remove a cancer growth from his brain but made a swift return. However, earlier this month, he announced he was taking time off to recuperate from delayed reaction to the operation.

Gene Siskel earned numerous accolades, including five Emmy nominations and an Iris Award from the

US Association of Television Programming Executives. "Gene was a lifelong friend, and our professional competition only strengthened that bond," said Ebert. "I can't even imagine what it will be like without him. The show will continue with revolving guests. In the future, we will see."

As a critic, Siskel was passionate and exacting. I think it was important to Gene that this was the only serious film criticism on television. That made him proud. We had a lot of big fights. We were people who came together one day a week and, the other six days, we were competitors on two daily newspapers and two different television stations. So there was a lot of competition and a lot of disagreement."

Siskel himself said: "I wish that I had got to know more people at the level at which I know Roger - because I do care for him. We agreed far more often than we disagreed. We shared a magical time together talking about one of the things we love so much: the movies."

PIERRE PERRONE

Eugene Kal Siskel, film critic, journalist and broadcaster: born Chicago, Illinois 26 January 1928; married Marlene Iglitzin (two daughters, one son); died Evanston, Illinois 20 February 1999.

## Bill Servaes

FOR NEARLY 10 years Bill Servaes was general manager of the Aldeburgh Festival. When Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears interviewed him for the job, he confessed he was more used to running ships than music festivals but, as it turned out, he was particularly well suited to this new venture in his career. The years from 1971, when Servaes took up the position, to 1976, when Britten died, were among the most fruitful in the somewhat chequered history of the festival.

William Servaes, the son of a naval officer, and himself destined for the Navy, was educated at the Royal Naval College, Portsmouth. Aged 18 when the Second World War broke out, he served mainly in destroyers in the Atlantic, with an excursion into the Mediterranean for

the Allied landings in Sicily. After the war, invalided out of the Navy and newly married, he had no employment and no home. After a temporary job, he went to work for a shipping company, the Orient Line, and set up house in Guildford. When the Orient Line merged with P&O he ran the business side of a firm of architects. In 1967, growing tired of commuting to London, he moved with his wife and family to Suffolk.

They found a house in Orford, not far from Aldeburgh, where P&O had lived as a child - in the Red House, where Britten himself had lived. They attended operas and concerts during the annual summer festival, but merely as members of the public. In 1971 there was a crisis in the festival management, and the general manager resigned. Colin Graham

the artistic director of the English Opera Group, and director of many first performances of Britten's operas at Aldeburgh, asked Servaes if he would like to be the new manager. Despite initial fears concerning his lack of musical knowledge, Servaes was an immediate success, with the public and with the press.

By this time the festival, founded in 1948 by Britten, the tenor Peter Pears and the librettist Eric Crozier, had become almost a private club. First-time visitors were made to feel unwelcome by those who had attended every festival since the beginning (I know, it happened to me). Servaes changed all that, welcoming new visitors without upsetting the old guard. He got on particularly well with Britten and with most, if

not quite all, of his co-directors; and he was adored by members of the press, whom he treated as human beings and entertained to splendid repasts at his house in Orford - he was a passionate and inspired cook.

This improvement in public relations was not achieved at the expense of artistic standards: on the contrary, the festivals of the early 1970s saw the introduction of several interesting new works by young composers, including Gordon Crosse's *The Wheel of the World*, an "entertainment" for young people adapted from three of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and John Gardner's *The Visitors*, both in 1972. Thea Musgrave's *The Voice of Ariadne* scored a great success in 1974. Above all, there was the final flowering of Britten's own operatic

genius: *Death in Venice*, which had its premiere at Snape Maltings, the concert hall-cum-opera house a few miles from Aldeburgh, in 1973.

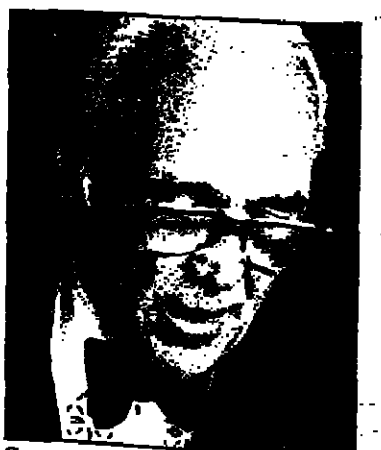
Britten had always loved Venice, and in autumn 1975 he expressed his sorrow at the thought of never visiting the city again. Servaes responded by taking the composer and his entourage there in November. In Venice Britten finished his third string quartet, which was performed by the Amadeus Quartet at Snape in December. His early opera *Paul Bunyon*, dating from 1941, which was played on BBC Radio in February 1976, was given its British stage premiere at the 1976 festival, when one of his very last works, the solo cantata *Phaedra*, a setting of Racine, was performed by Janet Baker.

Britten died in December 1976,

and the Aldeburgh Festival was never quite the same again. The Russian cellist and conductor Mstislav Rostropovich became one of the artistic directors, and in 1979 conducted a fine production of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. Bill Servaes, rising 60, decided that he had done his best for the festival and resigned in 1980.

As four of his five children were now grown up, he moved from Orford to a smaller house in Southwold, and spent much of the time in the Algarve. His final years were passed in London, where, in spite of the cancer from which he later died, he continued to live life to the full, to visit the opera, the theatre and the ballet - and to cook, for his large family and his many friends.

ELIZABETH FORBES



Servaes: managing Britten

William Servaes, naval officer and arts administrator: born Bourne-mouth, Hampshire 30 June 1921; general manager, Aldeburgh Festival 1971-1980; married 1945 Patricia Vestey (three sons, two daughters); died London 28 January 1999.

## BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

### DEATHS

GRONAU Sabina, poetess, on 19 Feb. Her husband, the poet, was killed in the Munich air disaster. She was 74.

### MARRIAGES

ANNOUNCEMENT: The wedding of the Rev. Canon John and the Rev. Canon Mary, both of the Diocese of Eborac, will take place on 28 Feb. at 11.0 a.m. at the Cathedral.

### ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh will be at the reception for the 100th Anniversary of the Royal Navy on 28 Feb. at 11.0 a.m. at the Royal Naval College, Portsmouth.







The Isle of Man has its own laws and a quirky way of life. But there's its serious side too – a £15bn tax-haven. By Jack O'Sullivan

# It's not all cats and kippers

If you are Manx, you feel different. Your Parliament is 1,000 years old; your ancestral language unintelligible to the English. Found notes survive; country roads have no speed limits.

On stamps, the Queen's head bears no crown, cats have no tails, and the Little People – Moolinje Veggie – are everywhere. Douglas's faded guest houses may recall Blackpool and the local accent sound Scouse, but this is a Celtic place. The Pagan Federation has just appointed a national officer from here.

Many are unaware of Manx distinctiveness. They imagine a bit of Lancashire floated west. But the island's creation story is more persuasive – Irish giant Finn MacCool fought a Scottish giant and flung a clod of earth towards him. It fell short into the sea.

You can see the difference the moment you arrive. This island is awash in spring flowers, thanks to the Gulf Stream, while Lancashire remains stuck in winter. White-washed cottages in Cregneash have a rare, rounded thatch, tied at the eaves just as in Donegal. With their peat fires, they smell like Ireland.

Neighbouring England – known as "the adjacent island" – is awakening to this difference. Yesterday, the island's leaders met to discuss the implications of breaking away from the UK. The Isle of Man is a Crown dependency, outside the UK, but London remains responsible for "good governance" and foreign affairs. The Queen is "Lord of Man". This tiny statelet, ridiculed as

"60,000 alcoholics clinging to a rock in the Irish Sea", is seriously considering the details of going it alone – practical stuff like passports, where young people would attend university, and who would represent the island abroad.

This may sound as serious as a bunch of corps commissioners planning a Third World War. But they are in earnest. And the issue is not Gaelic romanticism. Long gone are the late Seventies, when Manx extremists burned buildings under the banner "Financial Sector Fuck Off". Today's threatened rebellion is about money. In fact, about £15bn currently enjoying sanctuary from the British taxman. Threats via Europe to destroy this tax haven are behind a potential constitutional crisis.

The island bristles with shiny new buildings and household banks that underwrite Manx prosperity. From where brandy was once landed to beat the British blockade during the Napoleonic wars, Sun Life piles its offshore insurance business. The emerald Duke of Atholl sold the island's sovereignty to George III for £70,000. The English killed off smuggling. The Isle of Man went bust.

Since the Eighties, the island has thrived on low tax, offshore finance, something the Germans oppose by championing tax harmonisation. The fear is that London's Labour government will do Berlin's bidding and stamp out this late flowering of Thatcherism. No one wants to go back to living off spuds and herring.

I'm sitting at Heathrow, awaiting

the morning flight to Douglas, the island's capital. The lounge is stuffed with corporate types, silenced by an announcement. The small aircraft is full, warns a voice. "Please check in all hand luggage as there may be no space on board." I spot businessmen clutching bulging briefcases. Which, I wonder, is stuffed with tenners, all set for swift deposit?

Of course, I am imagining things. As the island's chief minister, Donald Gelling, reassures me upon arrival: "You could not go into a bank on the Isle of Man with a suitcase of money and open an account. Our banks are probably more strictly regulated than those in the UK." He is right. But the Isle of Man does have an unfortunate reputation. Remember that company found selling guns to Rwanda? Where was it registered? Ah yes. And the man recently disqualified for having hundreds of company directorships? Where was he based? Ah yes.

But more damaging is the reality of low taxation, which can hardly appeal to Gordon Brown. The top income tax rate is 20 per cent. Like-wise corporation tax. Capital gains and inheritance taxes do not exist. And no one needs to know your name if you register your company here.

So does the chief minister, Mr Gelling, favour independence as Britain flexes its muscles? "We will not be declaring UDI. I favour as much autonomy as possible without breaking the UK link," he says in his office, decorated with Manx pastoral scenes. Mr Gelling is the classic Manx leader, endlessly seeking consensus and compromise.



Devereau's Manx Kippers are the main export item of Peel, Isle of Man, the smallest city in the British Isles

Andrew Barton

His voters are, likewise, not natural radicals. They are close to their politicians. Mr Gelling's home address and telephone number is in the telephone directory along with other members of Tynwald.

I'm in the smoking room of Devereau's Manx Kippers in Peel, the smallest city in the British Isles (one cathedral, 3,000 people), whose tiny medieval streets all lead to the quays where mountains of herring were once landed. "I'm a Manxman through and through, but we need the strength of England behind us," says Peter Canipa, explaining the tastiest way to eat a kipper. (Microwave for 90 seconds, spread on toast with lemon and lime marmalade.) "We've stayed with the

Union through two world wars," he says. "Why change a system that has lasted 1,000 years?"

Andrew Douglas, a former merchant navy skipper with the affable face of a Manx Seamus Heaney, agrees. He laments the faster pace of life. "The traffic has become terrible," he says of the almost deserted roads. "Did you know that the ownership of cars per head of population is greater only in Los Angeles?" But independence is not for him. "We are at ease with ourselves. We feel independent. We are not English, Scots or Welsh. We are used to governing ourselves. But we are interested in evolution, not revolution."

However, there will be plenty of malcontents if London mishandles

Manx interests. In that tiny thatched village of Cregneash is Phil Gawne, a Manx language officer. Where in 1961, just 160 people spoke the language, today the figure is nearer 1,000. There are two Manx-speaking nurseries. "We need independence," he says, "to regain the self-confidence lost when a language is lost, an experience that is like four divorces and 10 deaths in the family."

David Canaan, Mr Gelling's long-time rival and a former Manx Treasury minister wants the Manx pound linked to the dollar if Britain adopts the euro. Nigel Wood, managing director of the Isle of Man Assurance Company, says the island might do better cultivating links with Norway than Britain. "My fear,"

he says, "is that we could become a pawn in the UK's negotiations with Europe and I don't for a moment doubt the propensity of the UK government to use us as such... What we need to do is to assert our position on the world stage." Such talk embarrasses Donald Gelling. He worries about frightening the island's all-important investors.

The Isle of Man seems true to its easy-going image, known as "traa dy-looar". But underneath, stimulated by nationalism in Scotland, lies suspicion of London that could spark a crisis. Do I sense hostility as I return to the adjacent island? Everyone stares at my luggage. But they don't smell fishy money. Just Peter Canipa's excellent kippers.

LONG-HAUL IS hell: everyone knows that. The seats designed for ill-nurtured bodies, the low-rent aircraft designed to maximally dehydrate while minimally refreshing, the party of six sitting behind you determined to party all the way to Singapore, those puddings made of pink shaving-foam that you can't resist trying, however well you know what the outcome will be.

Now try to imagine what it's like being a smoker in this situation. If you don't smoke, you won't understand, but our habit is important to us, emotionally

## THE JOYS OF MODERN LIFE

### 34. THE NICORETTE INHALATOR BY SERENA MACKESY

and physically, and being unable to feed it is like walking on hot coals. Exposed to the terminal boredom of in-flight entertainment, you sweat away the hours, unable to settle and chewing the flesh on your thumb. Your destination stops being somewhere you've looked forward to going to, but becomes the place where you can have a fug. No more. Now I have my little inhalator, I'm as happy as

Larry. While others twitch, I sit there, sucking blissfully on that white plastic stem. Throw your worst at me: Aeroflot to India, Monarch to the Caribbean; I shall face it all with equanimity. The rise of the Inhalator is an example of a glorious moment when something, at least nominally, is invented for one purpose and ends up being used for another. Like the sudden understanding of the real function of a Jeffrey Archer novel when

the loo paper runs out at your holiday villa. Maybe it's just about advertising laws, but the Inhalator is sold as an aid for quitting smoking, when everyone knows it is an aid for us sad rebels to indulge our oral fixations under the very noses of those who would control us. Aside from its addictive, pleasurable qualities, the habit has a powerful extra attraction: it gets up the nose of irritating do-gooders. Most smokers,

after all, probably only took the habit in order to annoy someone. In the meantime, as we fight legislation to get it outlawed from public places, the smokers' resolve gets ever stronger. And this little marvel is the newest tool in our arsenal. I love it. I love to sit in a non-smoking environment where steely-eyed matrons wait to pounce and lecture, to open my case, insert the cartridge in its little white holder and suck: at once smoking and not smoking. Gratification for the smoker, apoplexy for the interloper. A great result all round.

## You calling me soft?

Rachael's no spineless southerner. Seven years at a girls' boarding school has prepared her for anything life can dish out. By Cayte Williams

UNIVERSITY IS a great leveller. Students born with a silver spoon in their mouths still have to digest lectures, regurgitate facts and pass exams. Students from working, middle- and upper-class families all have the same access to books, facilities and libraries. But some will still end up with more debt than others.

Ian comes from a poor, working-class family in Leeds, and it gives him a certain directness. "I'm working-class and proud," he says. "I've never had a problem with it, but my brother went to Cambridge and he got a lot of stick."

Alastair, the public schoolboy of the house, gets on very well with Ian, but then he represents all the good things about being posh: good manners, an ability to deal with people, and charm. "I suppose public school taught me social skills," he says. "Whenever there are arguments in the house, I just see no need for it. We've just got the payment demand from the landlord for cleaning the house (during a particularly difficult time of tenant/owner relations) and there's some tension, but I stay well out of it."

Alastair went to Hymers College public school in Hull, and thinks it did a good job with him. "I would not have been the sort of person I am now if I hadn't gone to Hymers," he says. "It concentrates on people like me who get moderate grades and pushes them up to As and Bs. I'd been in a comprehensive school for a year before my mother took me out of there because the schooling was so bad."

So does he see himself as posh? "It wasn't a school for the super-rich," he says. "It only cost £3,000 a year." Posh or not, he still had his share of trouble. "Someone once rammed me in the street because of my uniform – there was a lot of opposition to public schools. Hull was very macho, there were always street fights, like in Manchester."

Robbie reckons comp did him no harm. "People who went to comprehensive school are more down to

### THIS STUDENT LIFE



SPRING TERM, WEEK 7 AT THE MANCHESTER STUDENT HOUSE

earth, not as narrow in their opinions and less arrogant," he says. "At university here there are some real toffs who think they know everything." But he has different plans for his own children, should he have any. "It's a big advantage to go to a good school," he continues. "I'd send my kids to a private school because they'd go on to a good job. Comprehensive education

is a bit of a gamble." If anything labels you in Manchester, it's which end of the island you come from. Depending on your point of view, if you come from up north you're hard and gritty (good) or macho (bad), if you're from down south you're cultured (good) or wet (very bad).

"There's a prejudice against southerners," explains Ian, "that they're all wine-drinkers and would rather sit in a bar than go clubbing. Robbie and Dave tease Tasha because she's from London. It's a running joke that southerners can't hack it. They think London is the best city in the world, they're so narrow-minded." And if anyone thinks Rachael is a soft-touch southerner they'd be in for a shock. She went to public school and loathed every minute of it. "There was so much hypocrisy," she explains. "One girl got caught at customs with drugs, but nothing happened to her, while another was suspended for having pink hair. Loads of people took drugs at school, but they didn't expel you for it. It was a well-known place and the school worried about it getting into the papers."

"There were so many silly regulations," she continues. "I rebelled by going down the wrong staircase, wearing the wrong shoes and smoking cigarettes."

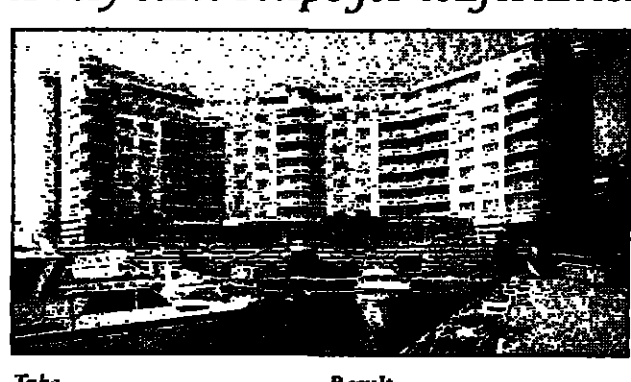
She was hauled up in front of the headmistress countless times, about smoking, bullying and general misbehaviour, but her piece de resistance was getting the girl with pink hair reinstated. "I went around with a petition, got everyone to sign their name with a pink pen, and presented it to the teachers." She remembers proudly. So did it do her any good? "It's ingrained that rebellious streak in me," she explains. "All my old schoolfriends are the same, we've all come out knowing what we want. I kept up a fighting spirit the whole time. It made me come out of myself. You had to be extrovert, otherwise you'd just sink." Somehow, comprehensive school sounds more appealing.

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# Voice of truth

It had become one of cinema's most suspect devices, but in *The Thin Red Line* Terrence Malick restores the voice-over's critical value. By Adam Mars-Jones



Voices in the dark: clockwise from left: Ben Chaplin in Terrence Malick's mighty *The Thin Red Line*, Ray Liotta in Martin Scorsese's *Goodfellas*, Martin Sheen in Francis Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* and Harrison Ford in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*

Terrence Malick's mighty new film *The Thin Red Line* not only rehabilitates a director who hasn't released product in two decades, it also plays its part in restoring the fortunes of one of the most dishonoured elements of film language: the voice-over. Both Malick's previous efforts, *Badlands* and *Days of Heaven*, made use of this simple or not-so-simple device. It's legitimate to wonder whether he can even contemplate making a film without it, as if his most refined aesthetic effects required the base metal of spoken narrative.

It is as easy to write a sentence beginning with the word "I" as it is to start one with he or she, but a first-person film sequence is hugely laborious, and a whole first-person film is an experimental dead end. As literature carries cinema its sweep and dynamism, the rendering of externals, so films envy books their effortless access to what lies inside. When Alfred Hitchcock sets out to adapt *Rebecca* for the screen, he immediately comes up against the book's famous first sentence. His camera's movement is admirably eloquent, but by itself it can't persuade us that it dreamt last night it went to Manderley again; Joan Fontaine's bodiless voice must do that.

In life a voice requires a body, but in art it only implies one, as viewers of *Sunset Boulevard* have come to understand over

the years, when the world-weary voice that has been guiding them through the story turns out to come from the one impossible place, the water-filled lungs of the man whom we saw killed at the beginning of the film, and who has been floating ever since in Norma Desmond's swimming pool.

Voice-over has become suspect for the same reason that it has always been attractive: its cheapness in the context of a remarkably expensive medium. Why, the performers don't even need to synchronise their words with the movements of lips filmed months before!

No wonder that adding a voice-over to a troubled or incoherent project is so much preferred to the expense of reshooting — hands up *Apocalypse Now*, hands up *Blade Runner*. Even in films whose production schedule is blameless, voice-over can become a mannerism, a way of melting down book pages and spooning them over a film at the last moment, so as to replace what has mysteriously leaked away during the long process of adaptation.

Just occasionally, voice-over is an intrinsic part of the architecture of a film. One of the most striking moments in *GoodFellas*, for instance, comes when the hero's voice-over gives way to his wife's, and Scorsese is suddenly telling a woman's story — not previously a huge priority in his work. The film is unusual among Mafia films in not glossing over the complicity of the women, and if Scorsese had found a way

of ending the story in the female point of view then *GoodFellas* might have been a great film instead of a very good one.

Don Roos's recent *The Opposite of Sex* uses voice-over in a sophisticated way, by locating the point of view of the least likeable character: Christina Ricci has a whole of a time as the vicious, manipulative Deedee, gleefully overturning the conventions of genre ("I don't have a heart of

*Adding a voice-over to a troubled film is so much cheaper than reshooting*

gold, and I don't grow one later either"). Here the voice-over claims the privileges of the director, commenting acidly on other aspects of the film. She undercuts a would-be touching sequence of an abandoned lover moping by referring to the unfair influence of the sound-track. "It's just music... it doesn't make him better than me." She even demands and gets a split-screen sequence, so that the audience can look away from the spectacle of her giving birth ("Excuse me, but haven't we seen this scene a million times before?").

Deedee's voice-over, quite apart from its large, disconcerting entertainment value, pays a subtle dividend to the film-maker and his producers. She acts not only as a

teasing filter but as a guarantee, a certificate of mainstream status. At least half the characters in *The Opposite of Sex* are gay men, and the film deals with such topics as gay teachers, vulnerability to blackmail and false accusations, gay men as fathers, AIDS and bereavement. But as long as the point of view, as represented by the voice-over, is distanced from these issues — indeed openly sarcastic about them — a mixed audience can be protected from the suspicion that it is being exposed to minority entertainment, a film with an agenda.

The voice-overs in Terrence Malick's earlier films weren't sophisticated uses of the device; their peculiarity was that they were wan, deadpan points of view with no particular pointlessness. Voice-over was used almost against itself, to suggest that people's insides aren't so very different from their outsides. Sissy Spacek's character was at least one of *Badlands*' leads, but the young girl, played by Linda Manz, was more a spectator of the entanglements of *Days of Heaven* than a participant. The narrative tailed off unsatisfyingly.

With *The Thin Red Line*, though, the dissipation of a central focus is thoroughgoing and carefully calculated, and the use of voice-over is a major part of it. The genre of the war film habitually operates by making us care more for one group than for another, more for one soldier than for his neighbour. Malick's film resists this: the camera isn't enslaved by the progress of

a military engagement, but feels free to carve the landscape of Guadalcanal, swooping obsessively over long grass blowing in the wind. Heroism is distributed unpredictably among the men, and almost everybody in the film has a voice-over.

Malick's film is highly unlike the films to which it is fated to be compared. In *Saving Private Ryan* there is a moment after the opening carnage when some American soldiers simply execute surrendering Germans. It's courageous to include such uncomfortable material, though an audience that has endured the previous half-hour is unlikely to get too excited over violation of the rules of engagement.

The parallel sequence in *The Thin Red Line* is utterly opposite. After C Company have finally taken the enemy position, we see the Japanese not as unitary but as horribly individuated. Some are sick, some are demented, some resort to denial, meditating implacably and denying the conquerors any foothold in their reality. One American soldier squats beside a pile of the dying, waiting with his piers to take their gold teeth. In this long, extraordinarily contemplative sequence, the viewer tastes defeat as fully as victory. And it is here that Malick deploys the most daringly eloquent of all his voice-overs, its source a dead Japanese face looking sombrely out from a wall of dirt, and asking with full posthumous authority: "Do you imagine your sufferings will be less because you loved truth and goodness?"

## Extreme noise terror

POP

COLD CUT/MASONNA  
QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL  
SOUTH BANK CENTRE  
LONDON

"THE AIM of these sessions is to make you think. 'What the hell was that?'" explained the inimitable John Peel at the end of his second session at the South Bank. That was indeed the question on all our lips at the conclusion of the Japanese noise terrorist Masonna's seven-minute performance. A gawky man with waist-length hair staggered on to the stage and fell on to a pedal that sent a whoosh of feedback crackling through the auditorium. Lying prostrate on the floor, he began tugging at a series of gadgets that were secreted all over his body like a terrorist's armoury, and emitted deafening noises that made your ears itch in protest. He lay twitching and pulsing about like livestock on the abattoir block, and shrieked into a microphone as if the apocalypse had arrived. He leapt up and whirled around in circles, wrapping himself up in electrical leads until he could no longer stay standing, and again resumed his position on the floor.

The imagination run amok amid the chaos of Masonna's sound — marching soldiers, firing guns, screaming children, collapsing buildings — while the urge to abandon the show was ever-present. His philosophy seemed to be: why have the guitar when you can go straight to the distortion pedal? Who needs instruments if you've got feedback, and why bother singing when you can turn your lungs to a pitchless yell? This was heavy without metal, punk without posturing. If anyone embodied Peel's mandate, it was Masonna.

Coldcut provided a sensory overload of a gentler variety as they paraded their V-Jamming prowess. To the uninitiated, the VJ — or video jockey — is able simultaneously to mix audio and visual signals with a video-sequencing computer. As a result, the sampling, cutting and scratching of film and music becomes one and the same thing.

Film has long been an evil of dance culture, presented alongside laser shows and lollipops to tickle the senses of loved-up clubbers. But under the watchful eye of Matt Black and Jonathan More, film and music are presented in exquisite synchronicity. Watching a blue whale rising up from the sea and slapping the surface, we were practically drowned by the ensuing tidal wave. Their music drew on sources as diverse as *Dr Who*, *Tomorrow's World*, Jello Biafra and Jethisla, but their orchestration of film was the last piece in the electronic puzzle. Coldcut have come a long way since their days with Yazz and the Plastic Population.

FIONA STURGES

## Charm will get them everywhere

THE LATE critic Jack Tinker once wrote that he always liked to find a word to sum up whatever he was reviewing. The word for the cabaret act, sorry, Irish international super-group, The Nualas, has to be "daffy".

Identically dressed in Day-Glo pink suede minidresses and (so we're told) life-saving girdles, the three songstress are like a collision between the *Late Lunch* high priestesses of post-modernism Mel and Sue, and the Nolans — The Eamonn Andrews Sisters, if you will.

Bouncing on stage from behind a silver curtain, they introduce themselves for easy identification: "I'm Nuala, she's Nuala and she's Nuala." In fact, although all three are pitch-perfect and preternaturally happy,

it's easy to tell them apart. One wears early-Edna Everage pointy Fifties glasses; another seems to have borrowed a pair from Su Pollard while the other must have stolen hers from Michael Nyman. That gives no clue to their ludicrously varied musical style but it does clue you in to their barking sensibility which creates bizarre songs which redefine the art of the non-sequitur.

Their success stems from a cunning mix of sternness with information about their "self-penned musical numbers" and rampant silliness. This allows them to rhyme "the Abbey" with "Punjabi" or "General Franco" and "Cinzano Bianco" while kicking up their heels — neatly shod in wet-look white

### CABARET

THE NUALAS  
THE DRILL HALL  
LONDON

platform shoes, since you ask — and doing the kind of interpretive hand movements beloved of bad TV specials.

It's fair to say that the likes of Barbra Streisand will not be rushing to record their songs. Can you see her covering "Curly Kay", a wickedly mournful ditty about a girl with a cabbage for a head who donates herself to starving school chums and becomes a saint? Or "Tragic Circumstances", about a worker in a fast-food joint who is yearning for a hip replacement? If their three-



The Nualas: a cunning mixture of sternness and silliness

part harmonies weren't so secure they would never get away with it, but once you succumb

to their charms, you're lost. As a result, the in-between chat — often rather loosely handled —

becomes fatally endearing.

They tell of their glamorous life in the fast lane, but are not too humble to sing ( hilariously) of their infatuation with a Hollywood legend. And they brim with writing tips: "when there's a tragedy you can always make a song out of it." The first half builds to a frenzied musical climax, with their friendly priest going awol on the piano, one Nuala giving great air guitar and another blowing the hell out of a recorder. It leads to the inescapable conclusion: The Nualas are the new rock'n'roll. You read it here first.

DAVID BENEDICT

A version of this review appeared in later editions of *Saturday's paper*

## Look on my work ye mighty and despair

TWO YEARS ago the School of Music of Bath College of Higher Education, together with students from Frome Community College, put on a UK premiere performance of Philip Glass's opera *Satyagraha*. It was a remarkable production of a difficult piece, boldly staged and beautifully sung and played.

This year the same institution, now called Bath Spa University College, has turned the page to a UK regional premiere of the final work in Glass's "Portrait" trilogy of operas, a series that began with the

celebrated *Einstein on the Beach* in 1975.

*Akhmaten*, first produced in Stuttgart in 1984, with the text of the libretto co-authored by Glass with Shalom Goldman, Robert Israel and Richard Riddell, proves more recalcitrant than *Satyagraha*. The 14th-century-BC pharaoh of the title, a fragment of whose image could be seen in the great Africa: the Art of a Continent exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1995, remains frustratingly fragmentary throughout. Although the narrative — such as it is — has much atten-

### OPERA

AKHMATEN  
BATH SPA UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE

dant pomp and circumstance, there's so little action that it makes those plays by Racine on an antique theme look like *Die Hard* in comparison.

While there are enough parts in the orchestra, chorus and acting corps to justify a college production, what you in fact do with *Akhmaten* — given the lack of a Royal Opera House budget — must be a ser-

ious problem. Even the music, expertly directed by Roger Heaton, fails to supply a convincing answer. By the early Eighties Philip Glass was recycling what some might say was an already over-stretched resource, and as the eddies and nausea-inducing spirals of his style repeat and repeat, you begin to wish that the score came in a *Reader's Digest* condensed version. You could lop two hours off the running time and not lose any music you hadn't heard before.

Given the opera's insistence on stasis, with hieratic

gestures replacing more usual means of expression, the director, Richard Studer, makes what he can of video projections as a source of much-needed animation. Comprising a series of short films made by students to fit into each of the three acts, the projections are often excellent, but lack the final polish that more time at the editing suite might have allowed.

On the few occasions when the score provided the high-art equivalent of a big production number, everything suddenly came alive, and the music was

punched out in bold, brassy phrases (with some excellent tuba parping from Rhodri Griffiths), that showed off the impressive talents of the orchestra. But after three-and-a-half hours (including two intervals), you were very happy to flee Egypt at last. That said, the bravery of the endeavour can only be applauded.

PHIL JOHNSON

*Akhmaten* continues at the Michael Tippett Centre, Bath Spa University College, until Saturday. Booking: 01225 875638

### ROBERT HANKS ON TV

'Ray Winstone... a raging ball of baffled arrogance in *Births, Marriages and Deaths*'

PAGE 18



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Welsh National Opera

# Boring. Boring. Boring

Everyone admires Millais' early portraits.  
The National Portrait Gallery wants us to reconsider  
his later work. They're wrong. By Tom Lubbock

With some artists, late means late. It means the work of their sixties or seventies or eighties. It means old. But with John Everett Millais, late means anything after about the age of 30. He had a remarkable career. One decade of early, and nearly four of late.

Millais was a child prodigy. In 1848, at 19, he became a founder member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and for about 10 years - from *Isabella* to *The Vale of Rest* - he did perhaps the best work of the movement. Then came the great apostasy. For the beady-eyed honesty of Pre-Raph ideals he substituted a series of looser, old-masterly styles. He became successful and very popular. *The Boyhood of Raleigh*, *Bubbles*. He was the first painter to be knighted. He said he needed the money.

Now the standard, the established, the absolutely obvious view of all this, is that it was a change for the worse. No doubt Millais did need the money, couldn't afford to go on doing the sort of painting that took a day to fill a square inch; and it's good to recall how irresistible these pressures can be. But excuses go only so far. So far as his art was concerned, Millais might as well have been run over by an early locomotive in about 1860.

Any exhibition of Millais' painting, then, that pays equal attention to his whole career, is unlikely to be just a neutral survey. It's going to have a point to make. It will be venturing a reappraisal. And that's how it is with Millais: Portraits, at the National Portrait Gallery.

Millais painted portraits all his life. In the early work, it was friends and private patrons who sat. Later he became the most demanded portraitist in England, and did a lot of public figures. In this show, the Pre-Raphaelite period is given only its chronological portion. So it's the later work, including Disraeli, Gladstone, Tennyson and Cardinal Newman, plus plenty of smart ladies and cute tots, that dominates the exhibition. And we look for reasons. It can't just be a fame parade, surely?

Reasons are offered, but they're of a peculiar sort. The leaflet which every visitor gets with their ticket says this: "Millais's late career has often been interpreted as a selling-out of the Pre-Raphaelite values of his youth, and his mature works have suffered neglect. Yet, as the exhibition shows, these portraits were greatly admired at the time and, together, form an extraordinary expression of their era."

I don't quite take the force of that "yet" - but it seems to mean that, because the late work was much admired in its time, it's somehow become "unhistorical" of us not to admire it now.

Look to the show's catalogue and you'll find some equally curious lines of persuasion. The leading essay reminds us that people have deprecated late Millais for an awfully long time, implying - I think - that a revaluation must therefore be due. (No: the time for a revaluation is when someone provides grounds for one.) It then proceeds vaguely to impugn the motives of late Millais critics, suggesting that they were, and are, snobby or inverted-snobby aesthetes, resentful of the artist's worldly success and contemptuous of his popularity with a big public. (Suppose this were true; it would again say nothing in favour of the later work.)

The odd thing about this supposed reappraisal is its complete lack of revisionary zeal. It seems to have no particular love for the paint-

*The odd thing about this 'reappraisal' is its complete lack of revisionary zeal*

ings it would reinstate. It just feels, in an abstract, leisurely, open-minded, even-handed sort of way, that this long-standing preference for one lot of work over another is a rather unfair and unsymmetrical state of affairs; that taste should spread itself out more equitably and more respectfully.

Of course, this isn't explicitly said, but I can't detect any more positive argument for the cause. And, in its absence, the appeal to a sense of balance becomes quite paradoxical. The only way it can get us to feel the "unfairness" of late Millais neglect is by contrast with the enthusiastic attention that's long been given to early Millais. But this enthusiasm it must also play down, lest it prove to be too infectious. In fact, the main problem with this reappraisal is not the feeble case it makes for the late work, but its failure to see how good the early is. And to put this the right way round: the only reason we have for being interested in late Millais at all, interested enough even to be "unfair" to it, is a sense of loss and disappointment. Simply: late Millais is the promise of early Millais, wasted.

The contrast is remarkably

sharp. Put it schematically: small pictures against large - a luminous clarity of shape and colour against a glutinous murk - precise delineation against vague evocation. The size point is very striking. You see at once that the early pictures are all tiny, some almost miniatures. This, together with the inexhaustible minuteness of Millais's technique, becomes a very strong psychological device. The image demands extremely close viewing. It can't be seen by more than one person at a time. The viewer is drawn into and held in intimacy with the sitter.

Take the portrait *Emily Patmore* (1851), one of the wives of the uxorious poet Coventry Patmore. I think it's the masterpiece of the first room, because it fully mobilises this intimacy. It can't be reproduced here, for copyright reasons, but if it were it would fill only a quarter of the page actual size. It's an odd face, made over-oval by its centrepiece hair. It pushes interestedly towards the viewer. Its pinkness is stressed by the plain ground of deep ultramarine against which the figure is set - which makes it a bit icon-like, too. Every bit of it is observed and described.

This is a tendency that can turn quasi-naïve at times - as in *Eliza Wyatt and her daughter Sarah* (1850), where the figures are maybe a little too dollish. Or it can become almost obsessively informative. With the portrait of *John Ruskin* (1854), standing on a rock in the middle of a Scottish waterfall, you feel that a group of the relevant scientific experts - a botanist, a geologist, a hydrologist - could append a series of explanatory labels to the various natural phenomena depicted. (Of course, Ruskin could have done all this by himself.)

But at the root of these excesses is the wonderful profligacy of Millais's Pre-Raphaelite style. It takes responsibility for everything it depicts. It makes it its business to know exactly what's happening in the world before it. It never fobs off the viewing eye with "oh, you know, take the hint, et cetera..." It spells out every detail. It recognises the peculiarities of persons and differences of things.

Now make the relevant comparison - say, *A Jersey Lily* (1878), a portrait of Lillie Langtry, actor and royal mistress. Like many of Millais's later sitters, she was a public celebrity, and you can get a bit of talk out of that. And I don't really want to be rude about this picture. It doesn't seem necessary. Who, passing it in a gallery unlabelled, would slacken their pace? What possible interest does it hold? It's a picture that's designed to deflect all but the most casual attention. Everything is vague and murky. Face, expression, gesture, texture of flesh, hair or fabric - it's without any sense of the particular.

Boring: this is the most prominent aspect of Millais's late work. You may say "stuffy" or "twee", but

the extreme boringness of it is the decisive factor. It's an art that could interest only those who didn't know anything better - who didn't know, for instance, the early Millais. And it's true to the paradoxical nature of this exhibition that it could make its case only if it excised the early work entirely - but then

nobody would want to go to see it. It may seem odd that a show should be organised specifically to promote the cause of dullness. It may seem odd, too, that the arts, whose boast has long been that they are among the most interesting things in the world, should so often be run by people who are clear-

ly among the most boring. But it is true - I don't quite know why. The real surprise is that so much good stuff still gets through.

*Millais: Portraits, at the National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2; every day until 6 June; admission £4, concs £3*



'A Jersey Lily' (1878): a picture that seems to be designed to deflect all but the most casual attention

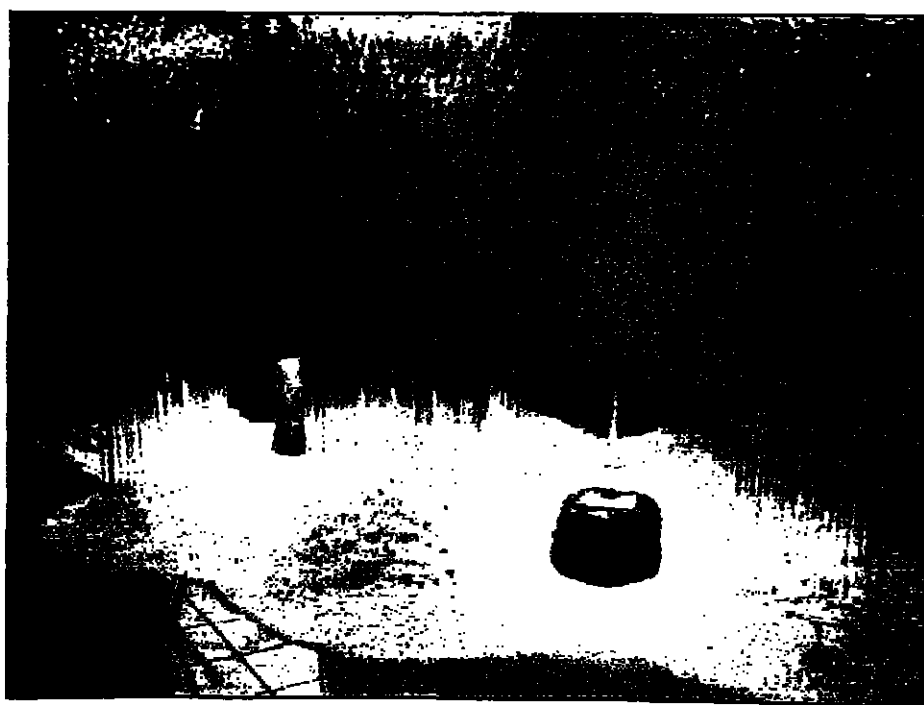
## THE INDEPENDENT COLLECTOR

JOHN WINDSOR'S GUIDE TO COLLECTING CONTEMPORARY ART. THIS WEEK: KEIKO MUKAIDE

GLASS BREAKS. So the glass-maker Keiko Mukaide - born in Tokyo, now artist in residence at Edinburgh College of Art - must be credited with something akin to heroism for pioneering glass installations such as her *Glass Landscape Garden*. Its cascade of clear glass waves, moulded on beds of sand in the kiln, looks as if it is still molten.

She is a master of the kiln, which has become more popular among glass-makers than blowing, using it both for vessel forms and for installations that are virtuoso displays of the medium's versatility - and her own. Her glass can seem to fluctuate between liquid and solid, revelling in its translucence, or imitate the patina-covered opacity of a weathered rock.

Her latest installation, *Secret Garden*, shown here, consists of a field of up to 150 glass plants, over 5ft tall, planted in three ceramic pots. The pots of three can be bought individually and carried off for display in homes. The plants are lampwork - the blowtorch technique used by seaside glass sculptors - and each bulbous flower-head contains three bubbles full of water. She dreamed up a way of inserting cavities into the heads, each with a channel through which she injects water before sealing it seamlessly with molten glass. People wonder how the water got there. The plants are typical of her inventiveness.



Mukaide, 44, took up glass-making after graduating in design from Musashino Art University, Tokyo. She was taught to work a kiln in the Eighties by the British glass-maker Diana Hobson at Pilchuck Glass School in Seattle, USA - then graduated in ceramics and glass at the RCA in London.

Glass gardens may sound like a Zen inspiration, but Mukaide says that although she still has Japanese taste, she feels she has cut loose from Japanese culture. The Scots, she says, have their own deep appreciation of water, rock, earth and light, and the movement of the

wind. Like other glass-makers from abroad, she is captivated by the quality of light in the north of Britain. "It is lucid, clear, more sensitive," she says. "I can't wait for spring."

Both she and Hobson, who now works both in America and Britain, were shortlisted for last year's Jerwood prize for glass. Perhaps Mukaide's entry, her glass garden - the only installation shortlisted - broke too many conceptual boundaries to be prize-worthy. But she is adamant that glass has potential for public installations.

She has exhibited in Germany, France, Italy, Denmark, Holland, Ireland

and the United States. Her work has been acquired by European public galleries as well as by the prestigious Corning Museum of Glass in New York and the V&A.

Her first public installation will be crafted into the architecture of the Edinburgh Festival Centre, due to open this summer. It consists of two rows of watery-looking, bluish-green glass tiles running throughout the building. They are tougher than ceramic building tiles, Mukaide says. She moulds them in plaster in the kiln - beyond that, the process is a secret.

Other techniques of hers that push glass to its limits include fusing blown sections together with *pâte de verre* (glass paste), casting window glass in plaster moulds with added sand to produce the rock-like effect, and what has become a signature of hers - fusing strings of glass together in moulds to form wavy vessels.

Now, when she is on the verge of making a unique reputation as a glass installation artist, is a good time to acquire her work - especially a bit of one of her installations. Her *Secret Garden* will be on show at the Crafts Council Shop at the V&A (0171-589 5070) from 28 April to 6 June; price £185 per pot of three plants. Her pieces usually retail at between £180 and £3,000.

Another example of her installation work, *Lucid in the Sky*, inspired by Scottish sunlight, will be in a non-selling exhibition with Steven Pollen titled *Domain* at the Fabrica Gallery, 40 Duke Street, Brighton (01273-778646 or 728339), from 17 April to 30 May. It includes a rainbow of glass fragments suspended on twine.

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A. Grand Central Terminal	
B. The Waldorf Astoria Hotel	

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**THE INDEPENDENT**





## HEALTH



## An unnatural harvest

Anxieties about GM foods may soon be overridden by GM cures. By Roger Dobson

**T**he potatoes being fed and watered in a corner of a Cambridge laboratory are about to provide a bumper harvest. Nearly 2ft tall, and lush and green, with an abundance of tubers, the plants look like the run-of-the-mill Désirée potatoes that grow in thousands of back gardens and allotments across the country.

But these potatoes will never be boiled, roasted or fried, and in six months' time genetically changed tubers just like them will be eaten raw by a group of patients to give them protection against hepatitis B.

Several thousand miles away, in Mountain View, California, tobacco plants are producing a compound that's already being used to stop tooth decay in 100 or so volunteer patients in London. And in Wisconsin, 10 acres of genetically altered maize are being harvested not for food, but for an anti-cancer drug.

Crops like these are in the vanguard of the burgeoning health science of growing medicines and vaccines in plants by transplanting human genes or bits of viruses into them.

While controversy rages in Britain about the safety of genetically modified plants for eating, scores of other GM plants are already being developed to create products to prevent disease, cure illness and save lives. Biotech companies are growing drugs in transgenic plants such as soya and maize to provide treatments for conditions as diverse as cancer, the common cold, herpes, traveller's diarrhoea, stomach ulcers, cholera and hepatitis. Also being grown is a therapy to mop up the physiological effects of drug overdoses, and one group of researchers is looking at growing a new type of contraceptive pill in the tobacco plant.

The biotech companies claim that growing medicines like this is the way forward. It is relatively cheap, mass production is easy, quality control is assured, and infection risks are almost zero. Plant vaccines are eaten rather than injected, and they don't need to be kept refrigerated — a major advantage for preventive health care in the Third World.

"Supply is not a problem. If you want more medicine you just go out and plant a few more acres of corn or soya bean or whatever you are using," says Dr Vikram Parakh, who supervises several acres of anti-cancer maize on the plains of Wisconsin.

The technology behind this revolution in health care is relatively straightforward. Many transgenic plants have been engineered to produce antibodies to disease. Our bodies naturally produce antibodies in



From cornfields to cancer treatment: US scientists are developing genetically-altered maize for an anti-cancer drug David Hughes

response to attack by viruses or bacteria, but in some situations the infection is overwhelming, or the body may be unable to recognise the invader as a danger.

What many biotech companies have done is to take a piece of human DNA carrying the genetic instructions for making a particular antibody and insert it into the cells of a plant. It becomes part of the DNA, which then gives instructions to the plant to grow the human antibody in its cells as if it were its own. It can then be harvested and turned into a tablet or capsule.

At Planet Biotechnology in Mountain View, for example, the DNA that codes for the production of an antibody that prevents tooth decay is put on to a tiny tungsten bullet and blasted with a high-pressure gun into the nucleus of tobacco plant cells. Transgenic plants are then grown, which produce large amounts of the human antibody for tooth decay.

Dr Julian Marr, senior lecturer and consultant at St Thomas' and

Guy's Dental Hospital, who identified the antibody and worked with Planet on producing it in plants, says, "Four per cent of the population don't get tooth decay because they naturally have this antibody, but in the other 96 per cent the antibody response is not good enough to be effective... What we have been able to do is to get the tobacco plants to make large amounts of the antibody we are using on human trials both here and in America. We have a second trial in London starting later this year. Our earlier results on 100 or so patients have shown that when the antibody goes into the mouth as a wash or as a toothpaste it provides protection for up to 12 months against the bacteria that cause decay."

A similar production approach is being taken by Dr Parakh, with the growing of anti-cancer antibodies in his transgenic maize. It's estimated that each acre planted will produce enough of the drug for about 2,000 patients, and clinical trials have already begun in America.

The idea with this antibody is that it identifies tumour cells and sticks to them, allowing delivery of targeted radiation therapy to try to kill them off. It's expected to be especially useful in dealing with cancers that have spread too far to be cut out by surgery.

"The antibodies are being used as targeting agents to deliver toxins to knock out the cells... Chemotherapy and radiotherapy cannot distinguish between tumour and healthy cells, but this antibody sticks only to cancer cells," says Dr Parakh.

In Britain, Axis Genetics in Cambridge leads the world in developing edible plant vaccines, including therapies for cancer, traveller's diarrhoea, cholera and hepatitis B.

Clinical trials on the Axis hepatitis B vaccine began in America later this year, with about 20 patients. It may be given in raw potato form or made up into a tablet, and its success is measured by the levels of antibodies that are found in the blood of the volunteers before and after they eat it.

"There is a conventional hepatitis B vaccine available, but it is very expensive. Our production costs would be much lower, and swallowing a vaccine is always going to be more popular than having an injection. Because it doesn't need to be kept refrigerated, it could make big inroads into dealing with the hepatitis B problem throughout the Third World," says Axis's chief executive, Dr Iain Cubitt.

However, it is the tobacco plant that remains the most popular among biotech. A group in California is looking at using the plant to grow antibodies that would block pregnancy and in effect act as contraceptive pills.

Twenty years ago, any idea that the much-maligned tobacco plant could be a force for good would have been treated with scepticism. It is now being used to make at least 12 compounds designed to fight disease. Perhaps the greatest irony of all is that researchers in Virginia are now looking to transgenic tobacco to provide effective treatment for lung cancer.

## Should I be a guinea-pig?

I HAVE recently been diagnosed with cancer of the colon and I have been offered the chance to take part in a trial of a new form of chemotherapy. But I have to agree to letting a computer decide whether I get the new treatment, or none at all. How should I decide what to do?

The doctors and researchers who plan trials of new cancer treatments are trying to discover whether a new approach is better than an existing one. If the trial that you have been offered is comparing a new treatment with none at all, it is because the researchers genuinely do not know whether the new approach is better or worse than none at all. So although it may seem that a computer is determining any effective treatment, in fact it is choosing between two courses of action which are, as far as anyone knows, equally good.

If it becomes clear that the new treatment is better than none at all, the trial will be stopped, and you should be offered the new treatment. Discuss this with the doctors who are caring for you. It would be unethical for a clinical trial to offer you something that is known to be second-best.

IS THERE any virtue in breathing the fumes of friar's balsam?

Friar's balsam is a concoction of seven different substances with wonderful names such as balsam of Peru, angelica root and Siam benzoin resin. It has been used for at least 500 years as an aromatic inhalation for colds, sinusitis and bronchitis.

I have searched the scientific literature and have been unable to find any research into its effectiveness. It is usually

## A QUESTION OF HEALTH



DR FRED KAVALIER

mixed with very hot water and the combination of the fumes and the warm, moist air helps to liquefy mucus and other secretions in the nose and sinuses. Quite a few people have a skin allergy to balsam of Peru, and it is not uncommon to develop a rash on the face after inhaling friar's balsam.

I WAS a prisoner of war in the Far East and have been told of a condition known as strongyloidiasis which can remain dormant for many years. What are the symptoms? Strongyloidiasis is a tropical intestinal infection caused by a tiny worm. It is possible to carry the infection for decades without knowing that you have it.

It can cause skin rashes, intestinal upsets and, occasionally, coughing, wheezing and lung symptoms. Blood tests and stool tests are used to make the diagnosis.

The symptoms of the disease can be very similar to the symptoms of a stomach ulcer.

Please send questions to A Question of Health, 'The Independent', 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL; fax 0171-293 2182; or e-mail to health@independent.co.uk. Dr Kavalier regrets that he cannot respond personally to questions.

## Risk means exactly that

EVERY PATIENT who accepts treatment from a doctor tacitly accepts that it involves risk. That is what "consent" means. We expect the treatment to make us better, but accept that it may make us worse. On that understanding, trust between doctor and patient is built.

That trust broke down at the North Staffordshire Hospital in Stoke-on-Trent, which found itself in the eye of a media storm last week after *The Independent* revealed that ministers had ordered an inquiry into research there.

The story in *The Independent* provoked outrage from this NHS hospital Trust, particularly over the comparison drawn with the Bristol heart babies case. There is no denying that the disclosure of the inquiry, into an experimental ventilator treatment used on premature babies, raised acute difficulties for patients and staff at the hospital, who found themselves thrust unwillingly into the media spotlight. That is regrettable but it was, I submit, unavoidable.

In the same way the Bristol Royal Infirmary has also suffered, and will continue to suffer, as the inquiry there turns over the painful legacy of those babies who died after undergoing heart surgery.

Both institutions may fairly claim that they have been singled out for investigation, when the problems raised are common across the NHS. How many cardiac surgeons shook in their boots as they watched the events at the General Medical Council unfold during its inquiry into the Bristol case?

And now, how many doctors involved in medical research are thanking God and good

## HEALTH CHECK



JEREMY LAURANCE

fortune for sparing them the meticulous examination which Professor David Southall, the consultant paediatrician who led the controversial ventilator study in North Staffordshire, is about to undergo?

The blighting of institutions that do much good work is a heavy price to pay. But both inquiries raise issues of critical importance to the conduct of medicine in modern Britain. And, despite the protests of the North Staffordshire Trust, the parallels between the two inquiries are eerily close.

There is a widely held, but mistaken, belief that the three doctors involved in the Bristol case were found to be incompetent. They were not. They were convicted by the professional conduct committee of the General Medical Council — which (as its name implies) is empowered to judge the conduct of doctors, not their competence — of allowing operations on babies to continue for too long, when they should have stopped following warnings from colleagues.

The GMC case focused on a high-risk group of 53 babies, of whom 33 died or were brain-damaged. Many would have

## THE INDEPENDENT

Investigation ordered after 28 babies die in hospital experiment



died anyway. James Wisheart, the senior surgeon, was also found guilty of misleading parents about the risks and, by implication, invalidating their consent to surgery.

In North Staffordshire, 122 babies were treated on the experimental ventilator, of whom 43 died or were brain-damaged compared with a control group of 122, of whom 32 died or were brain-damaged. Although the difference was not statistically significant, it was not good news. One question for the inquiry is whether the study was allowed to continue when it should have been obvious that it was having no benefit.

The third and most difficult question is whether proper, informed consent was obtained from the parents. In Bristol, parents were given an exaggerated idea of the success rate of the surgeons, in order to persuade them to let the operations go ahead.

In North Staffordshire, it is alleged, parents were told that the new ventilator was the "safest, gentlest" option, by researchers apparently anxious to persuade them to take it up.

One major difference is that the North Staffordshire parents, unlike the Bristol ones, were being invited to participate in a trial.

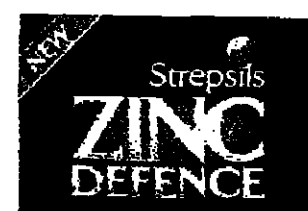
The latest edition of the GMC's guidelines on consent, which was published last week, says that participants in such trials should understand that it is research, that the results are not predictable and that the researchers "must not put pressure on anyone to take part".

How these admirable principles are to be applied in the context of a study of premature babies who are born unable to breathe is unclear. Any parent, when told that their newborn baby may be about to die, is almost bound to give carte blanche to doctors to do as they think best. As Professor Richard Cook, a leading neonatologist at Alderley Hospital, Liverpool, pointed out last week, obtaining consent in these circumstances is fraught with difficulties.

If the North Staffordshire inquiry can come up with some sensible answers in this area, then it will have served an important purpose.



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# MEDIA

The battle for the broadcasting rights to football is in full pitch. Jonathan Miller considers the strategies of the two opposing sides

## Pay up, pay up and play the game

In the grim Chancery Lane hearing room where the future of football broadcasting in England is currently being adjudged, the game is in roughly its 127th hour, with perhaps 300 hours left to play. The learned friends are in 4-7-3 formation (four junior barristers, seven QCs and three judges), and the spectator gallery has (except for your correspondent) emptied.

Chichester Rents is not one of your period courtrooms with red judges and resonating oratory but a large, low-ceilinged, open-plan office floor stocked with grotty civil-service furniture. The room is stacked to the ceiling with bundles and wired up for computers. The venue is usually used for complex fraud cases. The three judges preside from a small, unprepossessing dais. There are no wigs or gowns. It is all conducted in the dignity of fluorescent lighting.

Within this unpromising arena, the legal teams (players from all sides wearing a near-identical team strip of various subtle shades of grey and pinstripe) and a supporting cast of solicitors, locum economists, assorted experts and spin doctors, are playing for very high stakes. The case essentially concentrates on whether football clubs should strike television rights deals individually or be allowed to negotiate collectively, as they do now, under the umbrella of the Premier League (the current four-year deal between Sky/BBC and the League is worth £743m).

So far, the three judges (Mr Justice Ferris, deputy high court judge, the man with the whistle flanked by two lay assessors in the role of assistant referees) have heard 40 witnesses, all of them called by the Premier League. The enormous witness list, including such luminaries as Ken Bates, the Chelsea Chairman, and David Dein, the boss at Arsenal, has been a big show of force by the league. Occasionally, there is a headline, such as: "Bates dismisses claims from 'couch potato' fans that it is too expensive to attend games."

More often, the league, which has the burden of showing that its conduct is in the public interest, has played a traditional England strategy, kicking arguments up the field and hoping that some of them will get through.

They are defending a tidy little arrangement in which, if the OFT prevails, the Premier League has the most to lose and in which the fans, currently limited to a strict ration of television determined by



Conflicting views: David Mellor, top, and John Bridgeman



the cartel, have the most to gain.

The case of John Bridgeman, the director-general of fair trading, versus the arraigned giants of the football and broadcasting establishments, is important to the future of both television and football. The significance of the case is greater because it comes as the Monopolies and Mergers Commission is separately considering BSkyB's offer to buy Manchester United Football

Club, the biggest team in the league. The MMC report is due on 12 March. Bridgeman, a Welsh-born former aluminium company executive whose academic training at University College Swansea was in chemistry, not economics has never the less proved a tenacious opponent. Since his appointment to a five-year term as director-general in 1995, he picked up on an open OFT investigation of the Premier League that began in 1992, at the time of the original deal with Murdoch and the BBC. "Any other business acting in this way would be subject to competition law and I see no reason why the selling of sports coverage should be any different," he said after taking office. A brave position: football is free with abuse and Bridgeman has become its *bête noire*.

Mr Bridgeman's case is that the League and the Broadcasters are acting as a cartel responsible for inflating costs and prices. The result has been to put BSkyB in a dominant position in the supply of sports channels in the UK, and to inhibit competition in the pay-TV market in which premium sports programming is the main driver. The result, for the fans, is that many find it impossible to get a ticket to a sold-out stadium. Nor are they able to follow their team regularly on television. Only 60 of the 380 Premiership games are broadcast live on BSkyB; the highlights of only three games are available to the BBC's *Match of the Day*.

In fact, there are cameras recording the action at all of the Premiership grounds; it is simply that viewers are not allowed to watch.



Arsenal's Nicolas Anelka in action - but is current coverage of football on TV really in the interest of the fans? Albert Cooper

Instead, while Britain's top grounds are 94 per cent sold out on a typical Saturday and with waiting lists of years for tickets, most fans are reduced to watching Sky Sports Centre, in which sports journalists and superannuated footballers watch games on closed-circuit, and describe them to viewers who are not allowed to see for themselves.

The Premier League's case is that this is good for us and that there is no scope for variation. It is their claim that any more football would destabilise the competition of the Premiership, forcing weak teams to the wall and strengthening the top

teams to the extent that they could not be challenged. Only through the collective selling of rights, and benevolent distribution of the proceeds by the league itself, the league insists, can the clubs and sporting competition be sustained.

The stakes are high and, with the advent of digital television, likely to grow dramatically greater. Of the current four-year, £743m contract, BSkyB pays £570m for the right to broadcast 60 games live with some highlights, and the BBC pays £73m for the right to broadcast highlights. This arrangement appears to suit BSkyB, the BBC, and the Premier

League rather well. Bridgeman's case is that more games could be shown on more platforms by more broadcasters. He argues that there could be both more regional choice and, in particular, that games could be made available on a pay-per-view basis to fans who would otherwise have no opportunity to see their team - in effect, an additional, electronic, digital TV turnstile at every Premier ground.

Once in a while, reporters show up: last week, to record the cameo of David Mellor, BBC Radio Five Live sports presenter and head of the Football Task Force, to which job

he was appointed by his fellow Chelsea supporter, Tony Banks, the New Labour Sports Minister. Mellor spoke not as chairman of the Task Force, a quango which claims to represent the interests of fans, but merely as the holder of a £2,500 executive season ticket at Chelsea. "I have my own views, but not out of line with fans' opinions," he said.

Mellor's performance got good headlines. He affected exasperation at the impertinence of the Office of Fair Trading. He told the OFT's lead QC, Geoffrey Vos, that critics of the current arrangements "didn't know what they're talking about". The notion that income from television rights could be otherwise distributed was "a presentational refuge point you've taken which is not convincing". Other arguments, though, may finally prove more persuasive.

Over the next few weeks, the Court is to hear witnesses called by BSkyB and the BBC, as well as expert witnesses called by the OFT. Dependent on the results of the MMC inquiry into BSkyB, the parallel OFT case could see a changed geometry. Among the significant forthcoming witnesses could be Michael Grade, a Charlton Athletic fan but also a professional broadcaster who knows what it is like to be cut out of a cosy cartel. This could be Grade's chance to play a blinder, with an imaginative, argumentative dribble to the mouth of the goal. He could find himself winning the cheers of the crowd, even Arsenal fans, if he could offer a way to let more supporters get a look in.

## The battle to rule over the airwaves

THE OFFICE of Fair Trading's assault on BSkyB and the Premier League is only one of a number of regulatory battles being fought out in the communications industry at present. Of telcos, the telecoms regulator is looking at how telephone carriers charge each other to use their lines into peoples' homes and the Monopolies and Mergers Commission is yet to judge on BSkyB's bid for Manchester United. The most interesting battle isn't between regulators and companies, but between different regulators to see who

will be communications supremo. Evidence of this was seen three weeks ago when the *Financial Times* ran a front page story about how the Independent Television Commission was opposed to BSkyB being allowed to buy Manchester United. The purchase of the Reds is nothing to do with the ITC, but is evidence of how it is trying to prove itself as a financial regulator. The story almost certainly emerged from a series of lunches, held by one of the ITC's most senior staff, with journalists to put their case for its competence as an economic

regulator. The Government has published a Green Paper asking for views on the future of telecoms and television regulation. With the development of interactive services, cable television companies that are phone companies and Internet access through the TV screen, it seems increasingly strange to have separate regulators for what is increasingly the same business. But this is not how the ITC sees it and the ITC is scared of being squeezed out by Ofcom - hence its ham-fisted intervention in the United deal. It wants to prove it can work with the other

regulators and has already flexed its economic muscles. It ordered the cable companies to unbundle some programme packages to stop viewers having to subscribe to large packages of channels.

"That gave the ITC balls, especially when they were sued by Flextech and the Sci-Fi Channel, but won," says one senior media analyst.

Since then, the ITC has submitted its response to the Green Paper outlining a case for the status quo, with the ITC, Ofcom and the OFT working together when they need to - as they did when BSkyB was kicked

out of the bid for the digital terrestrial multiplex.

The ITC believes the cultural and political importance of television means it cannot be regulated in the same way as people sending computer data down a phone line. The whole affair is as dry as dust to the outside observer - it is a battle of the acronyms - but given that the words television, monopoly and regulation inevitably seem to appear in the same sentence as Rupert Murdoch and BSkyB, the outcome of this boring battle could be very interesting indeed. PAUL MCCANN

## Police and local press collide

### ANALYSIS

PAUL MCCANN

tails of any crime committed locally - again, to protect the identity of victims, who objected to seeing their full names and addresses in local newspapers. A meeting was hastily convened between local newspapers across the North-west, and local radio stations in Man-

*Editors argue that they are being cut off from a source of stories they regard as a right*

chester and Merseyside. Cheshire police backed down - and will hold back identities only of those victims of crime who specifically request it. The *Conington Chronicle* put the story of the police's attempted "news blackout" on its front page, and its editor, Jeremy Condit, believes this

helped push the police back to a policy of openness: "More local newspapers should take a stance if the police attempt to cut off the supply of information. The advantage at this paper is that it is part of an independent company, so I was able to make the decision to put the story on the front page."

However, recent legal developments mean that editors may be fighting a losing battle to keep some of these traditional sources of news. The Association of Chief Police Officers' media advisory group is currently engaged in drawing up new guidelines for local forces' dealings with the media. ACPO believes that the passing of the European Convention on Human Rights into British law, with its clause on a right to privacy, means police forces would be breaking the law if they gave out the identities of victims of crimes and car crashes. The updating of the Data Protection Act last year has also meant that the Data Protection Registrar is in a

stronger position to tell police forces not to give out details of victims who have been entered on to computer records, and accounts of incidents.

The Data Protection Act has always applied to police forces and victims of crime, but has been ignored up until now. Some in the media believe that the police's desire to obey it and the Human Rights Convention to the letter is symptomatic of a freezing of relations between police and press. "There is growing reluctance to help out when you are writing a background piece," says one member of the Crime Reporters' Association. "You feel that the police fail to understand why journalists have any right to any information at all."

On the other side of the argument, Elisabeth Neville, chief constable of Wiltshire, made a speech last year to the Guild of Editors telling of a man whose wife and two children had been killed in a car accident. When he got home, he found a pack of reporters trying to get quotes. Given the power of the law, and the power of such emotive tales, some traditional newsroom practices are likely to be on the way out.

## THE WORD ON THE STREET

NOT CONTENT with his column in *The Sun*, satellite TV show and radio programme, Richard Littlejohn is making a bid for a new career. He was at Radio 5 Live, broadcasting his sports show last week, when time came for the news. Unfortunately the newsreader was late, so Littlejohn took over. While reading a claim made by the Prime Minister that the previous government was to blame for something, Littlejohn ad-libbed his own opinion: "Well, he would say that, wouldn't he?" If it was possible for an organisation to faint, the BBC would have done just that. A producer rang Littlejohn's agent, Alex Armitage, to remind him that newsreaders are not allowed to make politically biased asides. Mr Armitage reminded the BBC that Littlejohn charges for newsreading and might be sending an invoice.

JUST IN case Planet Hollywood is too tasteless for your kiddies and the Fashion Café not naff enough, news comes of a new themed restaurant



from David Hasselhoff. Yup, you guessed it, a restaurant themed around *Baywatch*. Look out for a lot of ham on the menu, not to mention succulent breast and beefcake on the bone.

BY FAR the most comprehensive website on the Internet devoted to Rupert Murdoch is that created by Fans Against Rupert's Takeover (Manchester United fans, that is), which goes by the charming acronym *Fartat* ([www.fartat.com/fart](http://www.fartat.com/fart)). One of its offerings is "Hang Rupert", a game that borrows heavily from Hangman, using the Dirty Digger in the place of the

stickman. It might be basic, but it gets its point across.

THE LAST time *The Sunday Telegraph* grabbed the headlines was when its editor Dominic Lawson was named as an MI6 spy (a charge he vigorously denied). With its leaked account of the report into the police investigation of Stephen Lawrence's murder, his paper is the centre of attention again. Which is more than can be said of Mr Lawson, who is just over halfway through a two-week holiday.

IN OUR coverage of the departure of James Brown from GQ last week, *The Independent* suggested that Ronnie Cooke Newhouse, whom we described as head of press at Calvin Klein, had expected Mr Brown to accompany her to some of the New York fashion shows. We wish to make clear that Ms Newhouse no longer works for Calvin Klein (where she was in fact creative director) and that she did not attend any fashion shows in New York.

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# Tortured for refusing to reveal my sources

Mark Chavunduka, editor of Harare's 'The Standard', was arrested by military intelligence as part of a clampdown in January. Here, as he awaits trial, he examines the difficulties on reporting in Zimbabwe



IT IS now four weeks since my release from military detention following our article on 10 January 1999, headed "Senior army officers arrested - alleged coup attempt foiled".

The question I am most often asked is whether I regret having published the story, given its aftermath. My answer is "No". Without going into details that are *sub judice* at this stage, it is important for me to mention that during the entire period of my incarceration, my interrogators emphasised that they were not interested in the rights or wrongs of the story; they were not even saying it was false. All they wanted was the source of the article. I asked whether, since the Minister of Defence had said that the article was entirely fictitious, they would want us to print an apology and retraction, as is normal journalistic practice. Again they said that they did not want to hear about the minister or his denials, nor did they want any apologies - just sources.

The violent reaction from the

state is a nightmare that awakens me to the fact that Zimbabwe has not yet entered the era of moral civilisation, and that all the treaties that have been signed since independence in 1980, enshrining the rule of law and the upholding of human rights and the constitution, are not worth the paper they were signed on.

There are a number of legal instruments which the government can, and has, invoked against those it sees as wayward journalists and publications.

Many of them are relics from the pre-independence years, and when Robert Mugabe's Zanu PF came into power in 1980 the repeal of these laws was cited as a priority. However, they have realised that these Draconian laws can come in

handy, and they have remained on the statute books.

Among these is the all-embracing Official Secrets Act 1970. This open-ended piece of legislation has made it difficult for journalists to investigate cases of corruption within the government. There is also the Privileges, Immunities, and Powers of Parliament Act, which makes it an offence to refuse to be examined before, or to answer any question put by, parliament, or by a committee of parliament; to refuse to obey an order of parliament; or to publish the proceedings of a committee of parliament before the proceedings have been reported to parliament itself. This law was invoked against two private media journalists in 1992.

Worst of all is the Law and Order

Maintenance Act. Among its long tentacles, it is a crime to bring the President, the government or the constitution into contempt; to promote feelings of hostility or to expose to contempt, ridicule, or



disesteem any group of persons; to incite any person to resist or oppose the government, or any minister or official, other than by lawful means; to distribute "subversive" statements; or to publish

any false statement or rumour that is likely to cause public alarm and despondency.

It is under this legislation that we are being charged. With such a wide array of laws lined up, the difficulties of reporting in Zimbabwe are evident. There are no special laws whatsoever to protect the media, or to grant it access to information. Through various fora convened by organisations such as the Zimbabwe Media Council, the Media Institute for Southern Africa, the Commonwealth Press Union and others, there have been attempts to press the government to amend laws that infringe upon press freedom. Up to 18 months ago, there appeared to be progress, with the government agreeing in principle with the media on certain consti-

tutional changes. However, in the last few months there has been a dramatic about-turn on the part of the government. The Information Minister, Chen Chimutengwende, now speaks of tightening laws governing the media, and the Home Affairs Minister, Dumiso Dabengwa, told a funeral gathering in Bulawayo soon after our arrest that the government is to introduce new laws to ensure that there are no bad reports about the military.

Obtaining information from official sources has become more difficult, with growing hostility between the private press and the government in the last year. Mutual suspicion has grown out of a number of factors, among them the exposing of corruption within the government. Requests for clarification or comments are more often than not refused. Once papers publish the stories, often a rebuttal or denial is given by the government through the state-owned media, rather than through the publication which published the article. In our own case, every effort was made to

obtain comment from the army, the police and the department of state security. No comment was given, but one day after *The Standard* hit the streets, the Defence Minister was on the state-owned television and radio denying that there had been any attempt at a coup.

The recent events have left me badly shaken, but have strengthened my and my colleagues' resolve to continue fighting for the truth. In doing this, we are alive to the fact that we are dealing with a government which is at its most dangerous: a government that is very nervous about the political mood in the country, one that is acutely aware that next year's elections could mark the end of the 18-year honeymoon, and one whose worst fear is that it may be asked to account for many years of corruption, chicanery and worse.

The situation at the moment is still fluid. We still have to stand trial, and there are several factors that may come into play. But, at great risk to ourselves and to our families and friends, we stand strong.

As laddism wanes in the UK, its magazines are storming the US - but with a wary eye on the nipple count. By Claire Atkinson

## New Lad takes on the New World

THE lessons to be drawn from James Brown's premature exit from the editor's suite at *GQ* seem straightforward enough - describing Rommel as the height of mid-20th century chic comes a close second in the bad taste stakes to trussing up a topless Asian model and plunging her in a bath of blood. These were not the finest moments in the history of British men's magazines, and Brown has paid for them and other occasional lapses during his 18 months at Condé Nast.

Condé Nast are already talking about taking the magazine back upmarket to restore some of the intellectual credibility it enjoyed under Michael VerMeulen and Angus MacKinnon, and establish a better balance between nudity and new writing. As for the rest of the market, well, Brown's dramatic (if temporary) departure and the gradual arrest in the development of *FHM* and *Loaded*, are combining to provoke a rethink about the wisdom of cover-to-cover babes and breasts.

There is a fabulous irony at the timing of all this. Namely, at the precise moment when Britain's ardour is cooling, America is enthusiastically embracing laddism. In magazine form, at least.

The US version of *Maxim* magazine is the fastest growing title of its kind and is redefining the men's market in America as *Loaded* once did in the UK. Set up in New York two years ago under the banner "sex, sports, beer, gadgets and clothes", its guaranteed circulation has risen from 175,000 to 950,000

according to figures out last month. With *Emap* looking to launch *FHM* and *IPC* surveying the possibilities for *Loaded*, New Lad looks to be finding a home in the New World.

In an example of machismo straight from its own pages, Lance Ford, group publisher of *Maxim*, says: "We are now twice the size of *Details* and a third larger than *GQ*." But he concedes: "They are ahead of us in ad revenue." This is because conservative American advertisers



Ex-'GQ' editor, James Brown

are "skittish" about the magazine's fleshy content.

Ford says rivals told him men's lifestyle magazines wouldn't work in the US, but the magazine is expected to turn a profit in 2000, almost two years ahead of its five-year business plan. "We've done well, we were in the right place at the right time," says Stephen Colvin, president of the US arm of Dennis. "A lot of magazines are reacting to *Maxim*."

American *GQ*, the conservative fashion title, has a bikini-clad model on its front cover. *Esquire* recently devoted much of an issue to breasts, while the latest edition of *Details* features a vest wearing Liz Hurley on its cover next to the line: "Still shagadelic? Yeah Baby!" It appears that American pop culture is going through a metamorphosis. The big film hits of 1998 were *There's Something About Mary* and Adam Sandler's *The Waterboy*, both irreverent and very male. Couple that with endless Bill and Monica jokes on television and you get a sense that American humour is getting smuttier.

*Maxim's* February issue was adorned by a scantily clad Bridget Fonda. Its cover lines included "Lingerie Runway, a guide to Valentine underwear, and 50 Signs the World is Coming to an End. Inside, there were confessions of a strip club bouncer and a feature on how to get corporate freebies with the headline: "Here's how to get more perks than a coffee machine at alcoholics anonymous."

There are, of course, cultural differences that *Maxim* has had to take into account. As Glenda Bailey, the British editor in chief of the US *Marie Claire*, explains: "In the US, when *Cosmopolitan* pictured a girl with long hair which covered up her dress and made her look like she was naked, Wal-Mart decided to take it off the shelves."

So *Maxim* has covered up the nipples and promises rather less than it delivers in the UK. Yet despite American conservatism, Bailey says the size of the market offers publishers the chance to expand beyond



The reason why English publishers are invading the US is simple: it is five times the size of the UK market

their wildest dreams. *Marie Claire* is up 22 per cent for the last six months of 1998 and she says its owner, Hearst, has plans to bring other titles across the pond.

The most recent British arrival on US turf is Peterborough-based *Emap*, which became the first UK company to acquire a major US magazine house. It paid \$1.5bn for the special interest publisher Petersen, and now *Emap* wants to bring its hugely successful and fourth largest English magazine in the world, *FHM*, to the largest English speaking magazine market. As well as *IPC's* deliberations over *Loaded*, Northern and Shell is near to launching *StateSide* its celebrity title, OK.

*Time Out*, *Loot* and the BBC have all been here some time. The BBC has only one title, *BBC Music Magazine*, in the market, but has its eye on rapid expansion. Peter Phippen, president of the corporation's American operation, is looking for partners to bring across titles based on its programmes.

*Time Out New York*, arguably the advance guard of the British invasion, is due to turn a profit by 2000, according to founder Tony Elliott. It sells an average 85,000 copies a week and is set to expand to other US cities. Tony Elliott says: "An LA edition is absolutely likely. Film and music advertisers want us to do it."

So what is attracting all these British publishers? Paul Hale, head

of consumer magazine publishing at US investment bank, Veronis, Suhler Associates, says: "There has been a decline in network TV audiences and magazine publishers are getting their revenge."

According to Veronis, Suhler, spending on consumer magazines rose 6.4 per cent to \$17.3bn in 1997, with advertising growing by 9 per cent - its largest rise since 1989.

But despite the rosy outlook, expat Chris Anderson, who brought his PC games magazines to the US, warns of risks: "The market is inherently tougher and the economics of distribution is brutal. You have to reinvent the business model and that is why a lot of Brits have been burned."

But as Her Majesty's subjects Tina Brown, Liz Tilberis and Glenda Bailey can testify, the British do have some unique skills to offer. "The Brits come with a down-to-earth approach to magazines, with creative skills and great editorial ideas," says *Maxim's* Colvin, while Tony Elliott says the British are just more independent minded.

Chris Anderson, who has built his PC games business into a company turning over \$70m annually, explains the reason for the rush of British publishers simply enough: "America is five times the size of the UK market; when you make it big, you really make it big."

Just go easy on the Rommel and the blood baths.

## Father and son team score on the Internet

WHEN YOU first set eyes on him, Greg Hadfield seems an unlikely Internet guru. A laconic 42-year-old Yorkshireman, he rose up through the ranks of Fleet Street with a reputation as a tough, old-fashioned and rather obsessive "newsman".

In a distinguished 19-year career in newspapers, Mr Hadfield absorbed himself in jobs that owe little to new technology: news editor and assistant editor of *The Sunday Times*, chief reporter on the *Sunday Express*, senior reporter on the *Daily Mail*, education correspondent of *Today*.

Now one of the country's most successful online entrepreneurs, he contentedly predicts that he will never work in newspapers again. Mr Hadfield, together with his son Tom, are the creators of SoccerNet, the most successful football website in the world, and one of the most innovative of all online ventures. SoccerNet, which costs nothing to visit,

When an old-fashioned newspaper man turned to new media, it ended up as the best move he ever made. By Darius Sanai

gives instant access to football scores, results, developments and matches from around the world. It includes clever innovations, such as a Java-based "cheer" which goes up to alert you every time your team scores a goal. The two-man operation in Brighton, with the services of a small office in London, attracts 75 per cent of its visitors from overseas, including tens of thousands of "hits" a day from the US. On big match days, it attracts up to a million page views a day.

Unlike many other Internet enterprises, SoccerNet makes a profit from selling advertising space, and from its merchandising operation. The service started in 1995, when Tom Hadfield launched a home-

made football results service on the Internet, posting scores and round-ups on a website. The amount of hits it received persuaded his father to make a case to the *Daily Mail*. "David English made a speech about the importance of new media, and its seemed ideal for them to take this on," says Mr Hadfield.

The deal that emerged was ideal for Associated Newspapers. The Hadfields would be able to use the stable's newspaper match reports and results, in return for Associated taking a stake in SoccerNet. With the help of a designer, SoccerNet was formally launched on 17 August 1995, the first day of the football season, and also the first day Greg Hadfield had ever properly looked at a web-

site. "Until then I was just dealing with it as if it were a journalistic enterprise," he says.

Mr Hadfield kept his day job. Tom stayed at school, and it wasn't until October 1996, following the site's success during the Euro '96 tournament, that Greg felt confident enough to resign from *The Express*, his then employer. He struck a deal with Associated that brought him and Tom a six-figure sum for their stake in SoccerNet, with another similar sum for running the website over the next four years. Ever since, Greg has worked 20 hours a day, seven days a week, with four days off in the last year.

Mr Hadfield says that they sold out their stake to Associated because



Greg and Tom Hadfield: winning website

"without their resources it wouldn't have been able to thrive."

But not everyone agrees. "Greg sold himself short," a friend and former colleague says. "He could have got a million for SoccerNet in 1996."

This is possibly true - the com-

pany is valued at £8m to £9m now. But Mr Hadfield replies: "Even if it is true, we couldn't have gone anywhere without their resources."

Whatever the truth, it seems to have galvanised the Hadfields who, under the banner GHM (for Greg

Hadfield Media) have just launched a schools advisory service called Schoolsnet, which Mr Hadfield says "will be even more successful".

Schoolsnet, which Mr Hadfield, who still edits *The Sunday Times* state schools guide, is ideally qualified to run, is still at an embryonic stage, but the opportunities for advertising revenue are enormous, with a potential audience of countless parents keen to find the latest inspectors' reports on schools.

Mr Hadfield works from home, and father and son have spent almost every evening together for the past three years. "I never used to see my dad before," Tom says.

Mr Hadfield claims that he is not a natural entrepreneur. "I'm learning," he says. "I spent too much time being a wage slave. This is the most fulfilling thing I've ever done, but if I'd spent another two or three years on newspapers, I don't think I would ever have taken the step."



## NEW FILMS

### AFFLICTION (15)

Director: Paul Schrader  
Starring: Nick Nolte, James Coburn, Sissy Spacek, Willem Dafoe  
See *The Independent Recommends*, right.  
West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Chelsea Cinema, Renoir

### HOLY MAN (PG)

Director: Stephen Herek  
Starring: Eddie Murphy, Jeff Goldblum  
Redemption time! Jeff Goldblum plays Ricky, a scuzzball executive on a home-shopping channel. Eddie Murphy is G, a spiritual wanderer with open-toed sandals and an idiot-savant smug. G and Ricky hook up. Fearful for his job, Ricky uses G as a frontman on the shopping show and sales go through the roof. G, in turn, teaches Ricky a few soulful lessons; you know, about life and stuff. *Holy Man* is a film of bits and pieces. Parts of it (the satirical swipes at trash TV, for instance) are very funny, while Murphy and the wired, neurotic Goldblum in particular, both do well in fleshing out what are essentially one-dimensional, archetypal roles. The trouble is, the film never quite hangs together. It skips around trying to find the right tone, starts out as an attack on media-land, then pulls its punches. It runs worryingly out of steam. West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

### THIS YEAR'S LOVE (18)

Director: David Kane  
Starring: Douglas Henshall, Kathy Burke, Jennifer Ehle, Ian Hart, Emily Wolf, Catherine McCormack  
A cast of Britain's finest (Kathy Burke, Ian Hart, Douglas Henshall et al) weave to and fro through David Kane's Camden-set essay on urban romance. The plot is airy and simple: six disparate middle-aged types criss-cross each other over a period of three years; their bungled bed-hopping and snatched moments of human contact scored to a voguish pop soundtrack (Garbage, Morcheeba, Mercury Rev). Hart excels as a nerdy outcast, Burke as a musing, rough-diamond pub singer. All are well-served by Kane's generally witty and well-observed screenplay. It's just that *This Year's Love* doesn't quite know when to quit, cranking what might have been a sublime one-hour teleplay into double its natural length. Still, that's modern romance for you. You can't fit it into tidy little boxes. West End: Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Ritz Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas

Xan Brooks

## GENERAL RELEASE

### ANTZ (PG)

This computer-animated trifle is surely the most unlikely Woody Allen movie we will ever see. The nerd icon allegedly re-wrote the bulk of his dialogue to provide the voice of worker-ant Z who breaks out from his totalitarian rut when he falls in with Princess Bala (Sharon Stone). West End: Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Prince Charles. And local cinemas

### A BUG'S LIFE (U)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above.  
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritz Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas

### BULWORTH (18)

Warren Beatty's new satire is a blast: crude and condescending on occasion, yet genuinely audacious and committed, too. West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Ritz Cinema, Virgin Haymarket, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

### DON'T GO BREAKING MY HEART (PG)

So how bad is *Don't Go Breaking My Heart*? Well, first off, it wastes the skills of ERF's Anthony Edwards as a Yankee sports therapist in Blighty. Secondly, it overplays the charms of Jeany Seagrove as the widowed mum he gets together with. This artifice weepie wheezes on towards a finale so predictable that you'd have to be dead not to see it coming. West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

### ELIZABETH (15)

Shelkar Kapur's film is the story of a female figurehead struggling to gain purchase in a male world. But Kapur largely neglects the opportunities for fun in a story of independence triumphing over cruelty. West End: ABC Pantan Street, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage. And local cinemas

### ENEMY OF THE STATE (15)

Will Smith's fall-guy DA teams up with Gene Hackman's pensioned-off Pentagon warhorse, probes a political cover-up and gets embroiled in all manner of Big Brother-type trouble. West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Trocadero. And local cinemas

### HIDEOUS KINKY (15)

Through the teeny-bop backdrop of 1970s Morocco trends Kate Winslet's hippie single-mum, her two daughters (Bella Riza, Carrie Mullin) unwillingly in tow. West End: Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Curzon Minima, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Renoir, Ritz Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road. Repertory: Watermans Arts Centre. And local cinemas

### HILARY AND JACKIE (15)

Full-throttle playing from Rachel Griffiths and Emily Watson sustains Anand Tucker's biopic of the Du Pré sisters. West End: Curzon Soho. Repertory: Watermans Arts Centre. And local cinemas

### HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK (15)

Essentially this is *Shirley Valentine* with an Afro-American spin, but Angela Bassett works hard to make an impression among the tourist-brochure visuals. With Whoopi Goldberg. West End: Ritz Cinema, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

### I THINK I DO (15)

An excuse for reunions, for an ensemble cast, for the tensions of etiquette against emotion. Writer-director Brian Sloan ticks all the right boxes during this spry baby-boomer outing and yet it's too hyperactive and ingratiating for its own good. West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Virgin Fulham Road. And local cinemas

### JACK FROST (PG)

Out-of-season Yuletide tale. Michael Keaton plays a self-obsessed blues-man who dies and gets reincarnated as a snowman. The *Full Monty*'s Mark Addy co-stars as his best mate. They meet, they pass, and formula fun is had by all. West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

### LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (LA VITA È BELLA) (PG)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. West End: Barbican Screen, Curzon Mayfair, Odeon Kensington, Ritz Cinema, Screen on the Hill, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas

### LITTLE VOICE (15)

Holed up in her bedroom, timid North Country sparrow LV (Jane Horrocks) perfects strident impersonations of Shirley Bassey and Judy Garland. Bracing black comedy, Horrocks' vocal pyrotechnics, plus a marvelously weighted turn from Michael Caine push *Little Voice* through to the final curtain. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road. And local cinemas

### LIVING OUT LOUD (15)

*Living Out Loud* spins a sweet saga of female liberation, bolstered by a terrific performance from Holly Hunter as the lonesome divorcee drifting into an is-it-or-isn't-it friendship with Danny DeVito's bereaved lift operator. West End: Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

### MADLINE (U)

All aboard for storybook 1950s Paris. That gingerbread house on the corner is the boarding house attended by nine-year-old Madeline (Hatty Jones). That hatchet-faced woman out front is the strict instructor (Frances McDormand). That car going by is a Citroën. You get the picture. This overcloyed rendering of Ludwig Bemelmans' kids' stories looks a shade one-dimensional; all artifice and no art. West End: Clapham Picture House, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

### THE MASK OF ZORRO (PG)

This gaudy swashbuckler gallops full-speed through 19th-century California in the company of Antonio Banderas's authentically Hispanic do-gooder. West End: Odeon Mezzanine, Virgin Fulham Road, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

### MY GIANT (PG)

Billy Crystal plods his way through Michael "Heathers" Lehmann's Lilliputian comedy about a disreputable Hollywood agent who gets a few life lessons when he runs into a saintly giant (George Murenan) in Romania. Expect size jokes in the middle and glib morals at the end. Local: Harrow Warner Village

### THE OPPOSITE OF SEX (18)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above.  
West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

### THE PARENT TRAP (PG)

The Parent Trap catches Disney cannibalising its own back catalogue, re-heating its 1961 heart-warmer into a spy caper. Starring Dennis Quaid and Natasha Richardson. Local cinemas

### PECKER (18)

Trash auteur John Waters swerves into sunnier streets with Pecker, his fluffily satirical tale of an amateur Baltimore photographer adopted as a fly-on-the-wall artist by the New York elite. West End: Metro

### PI (15)

What sustains this film is the pure ingenuity of its central conceit, its ongoing "mathematics in the language of nature" mantra and louché too-cool-for-school demeanour. It all adds up. West End: ABC Pantan Street, Clapham Picture House

### SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (15)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above.  
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritz Cinema, Screen on the Hill, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas

### YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS (18)

Another troubling X-ray of American mores from In the Company of Men director Neil LaBute. *Your Friends and Neighbors* widens its focus a little, yet in all other respects this looks like a carbon copy of LaBute's debut. There are the same stage-bound confines, the same structured misanthropy, the same dense weave of dialogue. Two features in and LaBute has chewed this bone to bits already. West End: Curzon Soho, Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Ritz Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket. And local cinemas

## THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

### THE FIVE BEST FILMS

#### Affliction (15)

Paul Schrader's magnificently bleak study in fatherhood and fatalism stars Nick Nolte as a man struggling to escape the influence of his violent dad (James Coburn).

#### Life is Beautiful (La Vita è Bella) (PG)

Roberto Benigni directs and stars in this tragicomic fable about an Italian Jew who tries to shield his boy from the horrors of a Nazi concentration camp by pretending that the brutal regime is an elaborate game.

#### Shakespeare in Love (15)

This enjoyable romp suggests how romance fired Shakespeare with the creative inspiration for *Romeo and Juliet*. Joseph Fiennes and Gwyneth Paltrow (right) head a multi-star cast.



#### A Bug's Life (U)

Less sophisticated and more child-friendly than *Antz*, this animated feature spins another enjoyable yarn about an ant colony and its battle to survive. Kevin Spacey provides the voice of the chief grasshopper.

#### The Opposite of Sex (18)

Christina Ricci plays 16-year-old bitch-on-wheels Dedee, who causes all kinds of havoc when she moves in with her half-brother (Martin Donovan).

### THE FIVE BEST PLAYS

#### Oklahoma! (Lyceum Theatre, London)

Widely regarded as the best ever, Trevor Nunn's glorious production of the Rogers and Hammerstein classic fully deserves its West End transfer. To 36 Jun

#### Copenhagen (Duchess Theatre, London)

Michael Frayn's profound and haunting meditation on science, morality and the mysteries of human motivation. To 7 Aug

#### Toast

(Royal Court at The Ambassador's) So you thought that the comic fascination of a mass-production bakery in 1978s Hull was somewhat limited? Richard Bean's delightfully funny play proves you wrong. To 6 Mar

#### The Winter's Tale (RSC, Stratford)

An amazing rich and complex performance from Antony Sher in Gregory Doran's Romanov-style production. In rep to 4 Mar

#### The Tempest

(West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds) Ian McKellen (right) gives a low-key performance as a Prospero who presides over an island grimly reimagined as a correctional facility. To 27 Feb



### THE FIVE BEST SHOWS

#### Monet in the 20th Century

(Royal Academy) He lived until 1926. The gardens and lily ponds at Giverny dissolve into elemental visions: fiery lights, haze, liquid reflections, voids and depths. The strange last works of Impressionism. To 18 Apr

#### Portraits by Ingres (National Gallery)

Some of the most intense portraiture ever. Women: exquisite mixtures of flesh and fabric, dreams of sex and money. To 25 Apr

#### Andreas Gursky

(Serpentine Gallery) Photographs 1984-98. Huge, wide-vision, high-contrast, micro-detailed, digitally manipulated images of our everyday world (right). To 7 Mar



#### Oppé Watercolour Collection

(Whitworth Gallery, Manchester) Classic and still fresh 18th- and 19th-century British watercolours, including works by Alexander Cuvels, John Sell Cotman, Constable, and Francis Towne. To 5 Apr

#### Disasters of War

(Wolverhampton Art Gallery) "I saw this" - three ages of European war through the etchings of Jacques Callot, Goya and Otto Dix. Visions from the blackest of times. To 20 Mar

TOM LI BROCK

## CINEMA

### WEST END

#### ABC PANTAN STREET

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# TUESDAY RADIO

## PICK OF THE DAY

THERE ARE eight premieres in the Kronos Quartet's eclectic programme for the Glaswegian festival Performance on 3 (7.30pm R3): work from Philip Glass and Terry Riley sits alongside new arrangements of Bhangra gypsy music and Argentinian tangos.

It's hard to celebrate 60 years of Batman without endorsing the global industry that the caped

crusader has given rise to, but Happy Birthday Batman (9pm R2), presented by Phil Jupitus, gives a good history of this American institution. There's a welcome lack of grandeur, too, from Kenneth Branagh (right) in *The Directors* (10pm R2), although the stirring soundtrack contrives to make him sound superhuman.

DOMINIC CAVENDISH



**RADIO 1**  
(87.5-98.2MHz FM)  
6.30 Scott Mills. 9.00 Simon Mayo. 12.00 Jo Whiley. 2.00 Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Chris Moyles. 5.45 Newsbeat. 6.00 Dave Pearce. 8.00 Steve Lamacz. The Evening Session. 10.00 Digital Update. 10.30 John Peel. 12.00 The Breakfast. 2.00 Emma B. 4.00 - 6.30 Clive Warren.

**RADIO 2**  
(88-90.2MHz FM)  
6.00 Sarah Kennedy. 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan. 9.30 Ken Bruce. 12.00 John Inverdale. 2.00 Ed Stewart. 5.05 Johnnie Walker. 7.00 Alan Freeman: Their Greatest Hits. 8.00 Nigel Ogden. 9.00 Happy Birthday Batman. 10.00 Phil Jupitus celebrates the 60th anniversary of the American comic book character. See *Pick of the Day*. 10.30 Richard Allinson. 12.00 Katrina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Alex Lester.

**RADIO 3**  
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)  
6.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks. 10.30 Artist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Copland. 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert: Live from Broadcasting House, Belfast. John Tynan introduces a group of Viennese string quartets given by the Hugo Wolf Quartet of Vienna. Wolf: Italian Serenade. Webern: Five Movements, Op 5. Brahms: String Quartet No 1 in C minor, Op 51 No 1. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 4.00 Voices. 4.45 Music Machine. 5.00 In Tune. 7.30 Performance on 3. Live from the Royal Concert Hall, the second concert in a special week-long series from Glasgow. The Kronos Quartet perform a series of premieres, introduced by Brian Morton. Carlos Paredes, arr. Goljov. Romance No 1. Anibal Troilo, arr. Goljov. Respuesta. Aleksandra Vrebalov. Panoria Boundless. Hyo Shin Na: Song of the Beggars. Rezzo Seres, arr. Goljov. Gloomy Sunday. Terry Riley: Funebre en el monte diablo (Requiem for Adam). Franghiz Ali-Zadeh: Oasis. See *Pick of the Day*.

**9.30 Orient and Occident.** Does the West still believe in an East of its own making? Or is the truth in contemporary music and arts the border between Orient and Occident is finally fading away?

**9.50 Concert.** part 2: Philip Glass: New work. Schrittker: String Quartet No 2 (not first performance). 9.40 Postscript. Alain de Botton looks to some of the great thinkers of the past in the hope of finding philosophical cures for some everyday ills. 2: From loss of hair to loss of employment, Alain de Botton turns to Seneca for sage advice.

**10.00 BBC Concert Orchestra.** Conductor Charles Hazlewood. Simon Haram (saxophone). Satie, orch. Debussy: Gymnopédies. Heath: Moroccan Fantasy. Satie, orch. Desormiers: Trois morceaux en forme de poire.

**10.45 Night Waves.** Richard Coles reviews the premiere of Fay Weldon's new play, *The Four Alice Bakers*, and talks to Pulitzer Prize-winning author Larry McMurtry about his new biography of Crazy Horse, one of the most mythologised figures in American history.

**11.00 Jazz Notes.** 12.00 Composer of the Week: Dvorak. (R)

**1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.** **RADIO 4**  
(92.4-94.8MHz FM)  
6.00 Today. 9.00 NEWS: Unreliable Evidence. 9.30 Home Thoughts. 9.45 Serial: The Spirit Wrestlers. 10.00 NEWS: Woman's Hour.

**11.00 NEWS: Nature.** 11.30 Coming Alive. 12.00 NEWS: You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 My Music. 2.00 NEWS: The Archers. 2.25 Afternoon Play: The Night House. (R)

**3.00 NEWS: The Exchange.** 0870 010 0444. 3.30 Sale of the Century. (R) 3.45 This Sceptred Isle. 4.00 NEWS: The Learning Curve. 4.30 Shop Talk. 5.00 FM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 Mammot.

**7.00 NEWS: The Archers.** 7.25 Front Row. Mark Lawson chairs the arts programme. 7.45 The Cry of the Bittern. An environmental drama by Tim Jackson. With Lesley Carver, Terry Molloy and Rachel Atkins. Director Peter Leslie Wild (7/30).

**8.00 NEWS: File on 4.** After criticism of the European Commission for inefficiency and corruption, how accountable are our MEPs? Richard Watson investigates lobbying in Brussels and asks whether the European Parliament requires enough transparency from its members. 8.40 In Touch. Peter White with news for visually impaired people. 9.00 NEWS: Behind the Brain. 'Do Not Adjust Your Mind'. When we understand our minds, will this destroy our sense of self? Geoff Watts explores the nature of our existence and what this means for machines of the future.

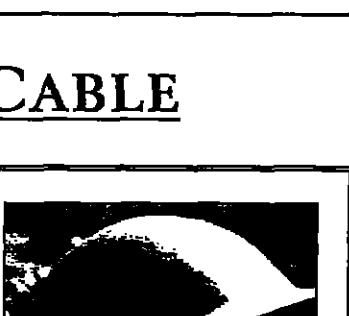
**9.30 Unreliable Evidence.** Clive Anderson cuts through the jargon to get to the heart of an issue which affects anyone who uses the legal system. 10.00 The World Tonight. With Justin Webb. 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Post Captain. Patrick Gallois reads Patrick O'Brian's novel of life and adventure in Nelson's Royal Navy. Mutiny off the French coast (7/10).

**11.00 NEWS: Angus Deayton's History of Alternative Comedy.** Angus Deayton is joined by Eddie Izzard, Jack Dee, Ricky Grover and Meera Syal to look at how alternative comedy has broken down barriers and paved the way for people who were once the butt of traditional jokes to become the next big thing. 11.30 Talking Pictures. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Book: Sam Peckinpah: 'If It Moves, Kill Em'.

**12.48 Shipping Forecast.** 1.00 As World Service. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.

**RADIO 4 LW**  
(95.8kHz)  
9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. 12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines: Shipping Forecast. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast. 11.30 - 12.00 Today in Parliament.

**RADIO 5 LIVE**  
(63.90kHz MW)  
6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 Nicky Campbell. 12.00 The Midday News. 1.00 Ruscoe and Co. 4.00 Drive. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 The Tuesday Match. Russell Fuller presents coverage of all the night's top football action. 10.00 Late Night Live. The day's big stories with Nick Robinson. Including 10.30 a full sports round-up, 11.00 News and finance. And between 11.30 and 1.00 a sharp and spirited late-night topical discussion. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports. **CLASSIC FM**  
(100.1-101.9MHz FM)  
6.00 Nick Bailey. 6.30 Henry Kelly. 7.00 Requests. 8.00 Concerto: Benda: Flute Concerto in E minor. Patrick Gallois, CPE Bach CO/Peter Schreier. 9.00 Jamie Crook. 9.30 Newgrove. 10.00 Smooth Classics at Seven. 10.30 Evening Concert: Music by Elgar. Introduction and Allegro. London Chamber Orchestra/Christopher Warren-Green. Cello Concerto. Mischa Maisky. Philharmonia Orchestra/Giuseppe Sinopoli. Symphony No 2 in E flat. LSO/Daniel Barenboim. 11.00 Alan Mann. 2.00 Concerto. 3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths. **VERGIN RADIO**  
(125.175-126.0kHz MW 105.8MHz FM)  
6.30 Chris Evans. 9.30 Russ Williams. 1.00 Nick Abbot. 4.00 Harriet Scott. 6.45 London Calling with Harriet Scott/AM Pete and Geoff. 7.30 Pete and Geoff. 10.00 Mark Forrest. 10.00 Steve Power. 4.30 - 6.00 Richard Allen. **WORLD SERVICE RADIO**  
(198kHz LW)  
1.00 The World Today. 1.30 On Screen. 1.45 Record News. 2.00 The World Today. 2.30 Women Who Dared to Speak. 3.00 The World Today. 3.20 Sports Roundup. 3.30 World Business Report. 3.45 Insight. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today (4.00-7.00).



Clive Anderson

# SATELLITE AND CABLE

## PICK OF THE DAY

THE TRIUMPH OF Anthony Minghella's *The English Patient* (11.45pm Sky Premier) at the Oscars two years ago was a refreshing reminder that there is still a place in Hollywood for thought-provoking films. This version of Michael Ondaatje's novel cuts back and forth between different times in a manner that requires great concentration from the viewer. It also showcases wonderful performances, particularly from

Ralph Fiennes and Kristin Scott Thomas as the couple who embark on a doomed affair just before the Second World War, and from Juliette Binoche (right) as the nurse who later tends Fiennes after a horrific air crash. "A Beast for Heroes", tonight's episode of *Warhorse* (7pm History Channel) examines the role of the horse in war since ancient Egyptian times. JAMES RAMPTON



Juliette Binoche

**SKY PREMIER**  
6.00 Redwood Curtain (1995) (3656). 6.00 Rhinestone (1994) (2327). 10.00 Little Girls in Pretty Boxes (1997) (2403). 12.00 The Directors (1993). 1.00 Hollywood Buzz (1998). 2.00 Redwood Curtain (1995) (3656). 4.00 Rhinestone (1994) (2327). 6.00 Little Girls in Pretty Boxes (1997) (2403). 7.30 Robin Williams Face to Face (1998). 8.00 Conspiracy Theory (1997) (3948239). 10.45 Sweet Nothing (1994) (30859). 11.45 The English Patient (1998) (442827). See *Pick of the Day*. 12.00 Side Heat (1998) (294939). 4.00 - 6.00 Directors (78927).

**SKY MOVIE MAX**  
7.00 Weekend Reunion (1990) (42830). 9.00 Dogmatic (1996) (45439). 11.00 Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness on the Planet of the Apes (1978) (70507). 1.00 Phenomenon (1996) (42852). 3.00 Dogmatic (1996) (45439). 5.00 Weekend Reunion (1990) (42830). 7.00 Phenomenon (1996) (42852). 9.00 Before He Wakes (1997) (70032). 11.00 Bad Moon (1997) (70055). 12.30 Reptil (1997) (80168). 2.00 In the Bleak Midwinter (1996) (81340). 3.40 Scars of the Crime (1998) (81373). 5.55 - 7.00 Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness on the Planet of the Apes (1978) (70507).

**SKY CINEMA**  
4.00 The House of Fear (1945) (408588). 5.30 Hollywood Hall of Fame (1983) (36323). 6.00 The Big Knife (1955) (822217). 8.00 Five Graves to Cairo (1956) (822762). 10.00 100 Years... 100 Movies (72247). 10.55 MASH: (1970) (899420). 12.00 Lucky Matt (1973) (7294502). 3.45 If Be Sees You (1944) (839492). 5.30 Close.

**SKY SPORTS 1**  
6.00 Fishing Adventures (1998) (313955). 4.30 Walker's World (1994) (454587). 5.30 The Next Best Thing (1998) (313955). 6.30 Wildlife SOS (1990) (454587). 7.30 The Elephant Solution (1998) (313955). 8.30 Great Escapes (1998) (313955). 9.30 The Elephant Solution (1998) (313955). 10.00 Seal of the North (1998) (313955). 11.00 Shark Pod (1998) (313955). 12.00 Everest Mountain of Dreams (1998) (313955).

**SKY SPORTS 2**  
6.00 Fishing Adventures (1998) (313955). 4.30 Walker's World (1994) (454587). 5.30 The Next Best Thing (1998) (313955). 6.30 Wildlife SOS (1990) (454587). 7.30 The Elephant Solution (1998) (313955). 8.30 Great Escapes (1998) (313955). 9.30 The Elephant Solution (1998) (313955). 10.00 Seal of the North (1998) (313955). 11.00 Shark Pod (1998) (313955). 12.00 Everest Mountain of Dreams (1998) (313955).

**SKY SPORTS 3**  
6.00 Fishing Adventures (1998) (313955). 4.30 Walker's World (1994) (454587). 5.30 The Next Best Thing (1998) (313955). 6.30 Wildlife SOS (1990) (454587). 7.30 The Elephant Solution (1998) (313955). 8.30 Great Escapes (1998) (313955). 9.30 The Elephant Solution (1998) (313955). 10.00 Seal of the North (1998) (313955). 11.00 Shark Pod (1998) (313955). 12.00 Everest Mountain of Dreams (1998) (313955).

**SKY ONE**  
7.00 Count Dacula (1987). 7.30 The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (1988). 8.30 Hollywood Squares (1988). 9.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (1990). 10.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (1987). 11.00 Jeopardy! (1963). 12.00 Jerry Jones (1941). 1.00 Meet and Greet (1974). 1.30 Jeopardy! (1963). 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (1990). 3.00 Jerry Jones (1941). 4.00 Jeopardy! (1963). 5.00 Star Trek: Voyager (1987). 6.00 American Dumbest Criminals (1992). 6.30 Dream Team (1994). 7.00 The Simpsons (1987). 7.30 The Simpsons (1987). 8.00 Rescue Me (1992). 8.30 Copers (1992). 9.00 World's Wildest Police Videos (1993). 10.00 Greece Uncovered (1992). 11.00 Dream Team (1994). 11.30 Star Trek (1988). 12.30 The Commish (1990). 1.30 - 2.00 Long Play (722368).

**SKY CINEMA**  
4.00 The House of Fear (1945) (408588). 5.30 Hollywood Hall of Fame (1983) (36323). 6.00 The Big Knife (1955) (822217). 8.00 Five Graves to Cairo (1956) (822762). 10.00 100 Years... 100 Movies (72247). 10.55 MASH: (1970) (899420). 12.00 Lucky Matt (1973) (7294502). 3.45 If Be Sees You (1944) (839492). 5.30 Close.

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**SKY SPORTS 4**  
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**SKY SPORTS 5**  
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**SKY SPORTS 6**  
6.00 Fishing Adventures (1998) (313955). 4.30 Walker's World (1994) (454587). 5.30 The Next Best Thing (1998) (313955). 6.30 Wildlife SOS (1990) (454587). 7.30 The Elephant Solution (1998) (313955). 8.30 Great Escapes (1998) (313955). 9.30 The Elephant Solution (1998) (313955). 10.00 Seal of the North (1998) (313955). 11.00 Shark Pod (1998) (313955). 12.00 Everest Mountain of Dreams (1998) (313955).

**SKY SPORTS 7**  
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**SKY SPORTS 8**  
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**SKY SPORTS 9**  
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**SKY SPORTS 10**  
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**SKY SPORTS 11**  
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**SKY SPORTS 12**  
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**SKY SPORTS 14**  
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**SKY SPORTS 15**  
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**SKY SPORTS 16**  
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**SKY SPORTS 17**  
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**SKY SPORTS 18**  
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**SKY SPORTS 19**  
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# INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

## CHESSE

JON SPEELMAN

THE GERMAN Bundesliga met last weekend and (as readers must be getting somewhat tired of hearing) the massive team of which I'm a member. Solingen, again won both our matches for a perfect 10-10: leaving us - with just one intervening match weekend in March - still in good shape for the last-round confrontation with the other powerhouse, Porz from Hamburg, in April.

Only just back from Calcutta, I personally played rather poorly and made a loss and then a win. Matthew Sadler, though, had an excellent weekend, beating Stefan Kindermann on Saturday and then winning today's game against Julian Hodgson. Indeed, it had seemed likely that I too would be playing an English opponent on Sunday: Stuart Conquest. But in the absence of Deenhorst's board three, the Norwegian Simen Agdestein, Stuart played a board higher and won well against Robert Hubner.

My thanks to both players for showing me this game, and especially to Jules for not demurring when I suggested I should publish it. Just over a month ago, the two had met at the Four Nations Chess League (4NCL) and then Hodgson had played 3...Nc6, had got a rotten position but had then won. This was Sadler's revenge. 7...e6 8.Nc3 transposes directly to a line of the French Defence but Hodgson wanted to create some-

thing different. However, 11.Bf2 was very strong since if 11...d4? 12.Nb5! wins it - though perhaps he could try 11...Be5? 12...d4 lost far too much time. Instead of 18.Bb4? White could have gained a



## Channel 5

**TELEVISION GUIDE BY GERARD GILBERT**